

3: Robequain--5

S-5

(no date) 1944

Laotians

116, 175, 177.64

Frante

636.64

"Laos was the last great country to become part of French Indo-China. French influence there had spread gradually, coming first from Cambodia and then from Tonkin and Annam. This peaceful expansion is forever connected with the name of Pavie, the explorer who set out 'to conquer hearts.' Nevertheless, there were clashes with Siam which was eager to acquire all the countries where Thai dialects were spoken. The French protectorate over Laos was not established until the Franco-Siamese treaty of October 3, 1893, under which Siam renounced all claims to territory on the left bank of the Mekong."

7: Thompson--363 [2]

J-4

(no date) 1937

Laotians

116, 175

"The early period of Laotian history is that of confused invasions by the Javanese, Thibetans, Indians, and Mongols. The last-mentioned in the thirteenth century opened Laos to the tribes of South China, and to the long struggles of the indigenous Khas with the invaders, the most formidable of whom were the Thais, who arrived in the fourteenth century. This beginning of Laos's historic period was also that of the Thai Empire which, though it centred around the Menam Valley, spread over Siam, Northern Laos, and part of Yunnan and Burma."

"One able Thai, Phya Ngam, succeeded in carving a kingdom for himself out of the Laotian principalities, whose capital he established at Luang-Prabang. This remained the capital until the middle of the sixteenth century when it was abandoned for Vientiane. The Thai invasions finally succeeded in dispersing the Khas into small isolated groups.

Phya Ngam was related by marriage to the Khmer kings, and his reign marked the beginning of close relations between Cambodia and Laos. At Ngam's request Buddhist missionaries were sent to the kingdom and with them came Khmer workmen and scholars. The eastward expansion of this bellicose monarch brought him into contact with the Emperor of Annam, who made a boundary treaty with him, as did the King of Siam on the Western frontier. The peaceful period that followed was duly interrupted in 1478 by an invasion from Annam, now freed from Cham warfare. This war-like interlude was a strange lapse on the part of the gentle and amiable Laotians, whose pacific nature soon re-asserted itself by re-knitting friendly relations with their Eastern neighbours. The only shadow cast over this period was the slight religious intolerance of a pious Buddhist monarch who tried unsuccessfully to forbid the cult of Brahmanism in his domain."

"The rise of Vientiane in the sixteenth century was due to its greater [364] proximity to Cambodia and Siam, and to its commercial prosperity. Cordial relations were maintained by the Prince of Vientiane with the now decadent Khmers, and with the King of Siam against Luang-Prabang and Burma. This alliance provoked three successive invasions on the part of the Burmese, who, though invariably victorious, were defeated by the country itself and forced eventually by famine and sickness to withdraw. The seventeenth century brought a period of needed peace both foreign and domestic. European travellers of the time have left accounts of the brilliance of contemporary Vientiane. The best narrative is by a Dutchman, Van Wusthoff, in 1641, who came to establish trade relations between Vientiane and Batavia, and it is corroborated by the accounts of two Jesuits, Martini and Marini."

"Early in the eighteenth century a series of civil wars over succession to the throne brought this peaceful period to a bloody close. Annamite support of one candidate provoked a fatal rift between Vientiane and Luang-Prabang. These now mutually jealous principalities called in foreign support, to the inevitable annihilation of Laotian independence. Vientiane was totally eclipsed as a result and Luang-Prabang fell under the double tutelage of Annam and Siam. "

"When Luang-Prabang was an independent state, two kings, one for peace and one for war, headed its government. The former was the real ruler, and he could select as his successor any one of his direct heirs. Five Ministers were appointed by the king as his aides. There was also an assembly, the Séna, to which certain families automatically belonged by hereditary right. Land was divided into provinces and sub-divided into districts, each with an appropriate official taken from the five classes of mandarins. The people furnished requisitioned labour, soldiers for the army, and paid a head tax. Further revenues were brought in by opium, salt, and alcohol farms, by taxes on ivory and metals, and by tariff duties."

"The Siamese naturally had a different organization for the lands which they successively conquered around the Mekong. The country was divided into muongs and subdivided into menangs, cantons, and villages (bans). A Siamese official, the Kha Luong, visited the provinces annually, as a sort of arbiter of disputes between the mandarins and the peoples, to collect taxes, and to see in general that the country ran smoothly. The Siamese left a remarkable amount of liberty to their Laotian subjects. Bangkok respected local institutions and customs, exacting only an annual tribute, military service and corvéés, like a mediaeval feudal state. A governor, chau-muong, was named for life, [365] but he could be recalled for neglect of his duties. He was responsible for taxes, order, and justice. A list of candidates to serve as provincial mandarins was sent to Bangkok for approval. The kromakana, or village mayors, were appointed locally from among the rich landowners, merchants, or citizens noted for their wisdom and virtue. All officials were required to have a spotless judicial past, and to take an annual oath of loyalty to the Siamese king. Land and head taxes were paid by the male population between the ages of eighteen and fifty according to lists drawn up on the basis of a tri-annual census. Corvéés and taxes, in theory, were graded according to age, position, health, and poverty. The Chinese farmed indirect taxes with their usual acumen and profit."

"The judicial organization was the weakest feature of Siamese rule. Judgments were arbitrary and confused, especially where national customs played no part. The venality of the judges, both mandarin and village, was notorious. Cases could be dragged out indefinitely through the lifetime of several judges and at great expense to the litigants. Only those suits were settled quickly where the social and economic position of one party was definitely superior to that of its rival. Only those litigants who could furnish neither money nor guaranty of bail were put into prison. The principle of collective responsibility existed here as elsewhere in Indo-China. The chief judicial flaws were in the application of the law, and not in the code itself. The Siamese were remarkable for their use of native law wherever possible."

"In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Laos, like Cambodia, was the scene of Siamese and Annamite rivalry, interrupted by Annamite warfare with the Chams and Taysons, and the Siamese with the Burmese and Pegouans. At the time of the French conquest the Siamese had definitely the upper hand. They contented themselves with leaving nominal power to the King of Luang-Prabang and to the feudal chieftains, who governed Laotians muongs from father to son, and among [366] whom they fostered rivalries. The Siamese, unfortunately, practised a policy which they had learned, to their sorrow, from the Burmese--that of forced expatriation. To populate their own provinces, depleted by warfare, the Siamese drained Laos of thousands of its inhabitants. The fact that the country thus became so much the less desirable to Annam was to them no minor consideration. The Annamites proceeded to annex the principality of Xieng-Khouang in retaliation. Siamese action was mainly inspired by the ideal of constituting a great Thai Empire. Such a policy involved consolidating their recent conquests on the left bank of the Mekong, and creating an hereditary fief at Bassac. Getting this hegemony recognized by their neighbours, notably the Annamites, was complicated enough without taking the newly-arrived French into consideration."

"A series of invasions by the Chinese Hos was another factor in the situation. They came first in 1864, when civil war in Yunnan drove the famished refugees South. They came originally in scattered groups, but later organized themselves into armed bands which carried on regular brigandage. They had plenty of scope for their activities, since rival Laotian princes called upon their services only too frequently in their local conflicts.

The innumerable and systematic atrocities to which the Hos subjected the Laotians met with absolutely no resistance from them. The people simply fled at their approach, even from the capital Luang-Prabang. The Siamese made vague gestures of protection, but did nothing more than hasten their policy of wholesale deportations across the Mekong. Pavie, who happened to be in Luang-Prabang at the time, has left a moving description of this tragic exodus and of his own efforts to save the hopelessly be-muddled king. It was due almost entirely to Pavie that France began to interest herself in Laos's fate and to ruin--temporarily at least--Siam's dream of a Thai Empire."

7: Thompson--366-367
116, 175, 648

J-4

(no date) 1937

Laotians-1-2

"France's 1883 treaty with Hué, and her pre-occupation with Tonkin, did not escape the notice of Siam. Backed by England, who saw in Laos a safe outlet for Siamese ambitions, Bangkok redoubled its efforts to get control of the lands belonging to the senile and insouciant king of Luang-Prabang. The Siamese expedition was prepared with such secrecy that De Kergaradec, the French envoy at Bangkok, only knew of it after the troops' departure. The Court of Hué, though feeling none too cordially towards the French, was not slow in pointing out this breach in Annam's sovereign rights in Laos, for which France was now [367] responsible. A protest to Bangkok was necessarily vague because of the ill-defined rights of both Siam and Annam in the North, but it eventuated in the signing of a seven-years agreement between Siam and France on May 7, 1886. France profited by this arrangement to the extent of having a consul at Luang-Prabang and certain extra-territorial rights in Siam. The ratification of this treaty for the first time raised definitely the problem of Annamite-Siamese-Laotian frontiers. Pavie was dispatched again to gather the information necessary to drawing boundary lines in Upper Laos. He returned not only with the technical knowledge required, but with the conviction that the oppressed people of Luang-Prabang would relish a French Protectorate as a defence against Siamese encroachments and Hos invasions. His efforts led to the conclusion of an agreement on March 27, 1889, by which the Siamese were to stop the eastward march of their troops, evacuate the region of Cammon, where however, a Siamese khaluong had a right to provisional residence, and the French to a

7: Thompson--366-367

J-4

(no date) 1937

Laotians-2

116, 175, 648

military post at Napé.

As time went on the French claimed that the Siamese had fulfilled none of these conditions and were pushing steadily ahead in Laos. In proportion as these grievances piled up, the Metropolitan government was unwilling to take any action against Siam, especially as Tonkin was giving them quite enough trouble as it was. The English were simultaneously expanding in Upper Burma and in the Shan States, and getting ever nearer to Upper Laos."

7: Thompson--367
116, 175, 484, 654

J-4

(no date) 1937

Laotians

"Not until 1889, when Pavie was given a semi-official mission and numerous collaborators to study the economic possibilities of the upper country, did France's interest there re-awaken. Despite Siamese opposition the mission was able to obtain precise and exhaustive information about the country, all the way from Yunnan to Cambodia, for the government and the newly formed French Commercial Syndicate of Upper Laos."

7: Thompson--367-368

J-4

(no date) 1937

Laotians

116, 175, 726, 728

"The fuse which set off the accumulating grievances against Siam was the suicide of the French consul at Luang-Prabang, worn out by his struggles with the Siamese. His death shocked the Chamber of Deputies into voting unanimously for action, which had also the Commercial Syndicate's backing and Pavie's documentation on which to act. The military campaign which followed in 1893 drove all the Siamese from the east bank of the Mekong, from Cambodia to Khemmaret. These operations against Siam centred around three points, but the most important was the naval demonstration at Pak Nam. A treaty was subsequently concluded on the basis of the ultimatum which called [368] for evacuation of the Mekong's left bank and indemnity for Siamese aggression. Siam found to her sorrow that too much faith had been placed in English backing and France's indifference and preoccupation with Tonkin. If in carrying out the evacuation clause Siam forced wholesale deportations of the Laotians to her territory it was the final manifestation of her drang nach Osten."

"Almost at the same time complications with England began to develop over her encroachments in the Shan States. A commission was named in 1894 to study the problem, and Pavie headed the French delegation. Its work proved to be too slow for the English, who hastened matters by raising their flag at Muong Sing, despite Pavie's protests. New discussions and surveys resulted in another move on the part of the English, who this time occupied Tong-Muong-Sing. France seemed hopelessly weak and vacillating by contrast with England's strong action. While Pavie was engaged in this struggle Commandant Fournier was working on the South Chinese frontier, between the Black River and the Mekong. The treaty of Shimonoseki hastened the prompt solution of these frontier problems by an agreement that was favourable to the French and hostile to the British. This influenced the agreement signed between these two powers in May 1896, in which they renounced mutually aggression against Siam. England abandoned Muong Sing to France, thus giving the latter control of all the left bank of the Mekong from Yunnan to the Cambodian frontier. "

"It may be remarked that the centre of Indo-China, and especially the region traversed by the upper course of the Mekong, is made up of kingdoms and principalities, formed for the most part out of the same territory which surrounds a town, always at logger-heads with one another, absorbed one after the other by the strongest States and only maintaining their independence in the interval through the rivalry of their powerful neighbours. Paying tribute first to the one side and then to the other, sometimes [292] to both at once, these Laos States have often been as reasonably considered Burmese as Annamite, or later on, as Siamese. At war with Annam now and again, the Laotians of this region conquered Tonquin eight centuries ago, but it is, none the less, with the Court of Hué that Luang Prabang preserves the closest ties. The chronicles of the town, which have been very conscientiously kept and which were saved from the flames by M. Pavie, testify in many passages to this state of dependency; and among these annals may be found the narrative of an invasion of Annamite troops in the seventeenth century which led to the suicide of the sovereign of Luang Prabang. (1) At a more

1. The legend has it that the king, when on the point of being made prisoner, had himself attached to the trunk of an elephant and the animal taken down into the river. A pagoda was erected in memory of the drowned ruler.

10: d'Orleans--291-292

T-3

(1891-92) 1894

Laos-2

116, 175, 627, 631, 721

recent date eye-witnesses have related the expedition of Deo Van Tri referred to in a previous chapter, the Laf chief assuming his right to treat with the king upon behalf of the Emperor of Annam."

10: d'Orleans--316

T-3

(1891-92) 1894

Laos

116, 175, 197, 241, 511, 563

Ethnic subgroups

"In speaking of the inhabitants of the principality of Luang Prabang, I referred to the Lus, the Meos and the Chinese, and a few words must be said about all three.

The first mentioned strike me as being, from an ethnographical point of view, very similar to the Laotians, whose language they speak, with a few slight differences of dialect, but they are smaller, punier and in a more poverty-stricken state. We saw one of their villages, just behind Luang Prabang, and its poverty was the most salient feature about it. Coming originally from Sibsompanas, where they form the principal element of the population, they have been driven south by Chinese wars and invasions, and several of them told me that they had not the means of returning home. Moreover, they are just as well off where they are, for, like the Kas, they cultivate the soil, planting rice fields for the Laotians."

116, 175, 197

"Lao, a Thai language spoken throughout most of the middle Mekong basin (Laos), is a much more recent as well as more successful invader of Indochina. The early home of the Thai peoples was southern and southwestern China, whence they migrated southward and eastward into present-day Siam and Indochina. The Lao, together with the Siamese, made up the southern front of this expansion, which at the turn of the first millenium A. D. began to exert gradually increasing pressure on the Mon-Khmer civilization to the south. The famous Rama Khamheng inscription of 1292, the earliest monument of the Siamese language, signalizes the final disruption of Mon-Khmer civilization by the economically and politically more aggressive Thai culture. Other Thai groups, smaller and less cohesive, made their way eastward into the mountainous areas of northern and western Tonkin. Linguistically these groups are represented by Tho, Black Tai, and White Tai. Thai languages are also spoken through much of southern China (Dioi, Nung), in Burma (Shan, Khamti), and until recent times were even represented far to the west in Assam (Ahom). They are monosyllabic and tonal like Chinese, and a Thai-Chinese language family has traditionally been accepted by most scholars. On closer view, however, the basic root affinities appear to lie with Indonesian (Malayo-Polynesian) rather than with Chinese; the Chinese lexical elements belong to a later cultural horizon and must be regarded as [382] ancient borrowings--contrast, for example, Thai *nok 'bird,' Indonesian *manuk 'fowl, bird:' with Thai *kai, Chinese *kiei 'fowl' (the domesticated bird, belonging to a later cultural level). Chinese, it would

116, 175, 197

seem, exerted a dominant influence on Thai as regards monosyllables and tones, while Thai in turn exercised a similar influence on Annamese (see the discussion below). (3)

3. See the discussion in P.K. Benedict, 'Thai, Kadai, and Indonesian: a new alignment in Southeastern Asia,' American anthropologist, 44 (1942), 576-601.

Here we are presented with a striking example of the intricate patterning shown in the linguistic and cultural history of Southeast Asia."

23: Franck--280
116, 175, 609

T-2 (1924) 1926

Laotians
Ethnic subgroup

"In Xieng Khuang there stands a monument to six Frenchmen, five of them killed in France during the war, and one, like the dozen native soldiers whose names also appear on it, tué par les Méos rebelles. It seems there was a great Miao uprising in the Laos during the winter of 1918-19, the bloodiest battle of which took place at Nong-het, between the 'rebels' and the French, more exactly the native soldiers of the French. It was no surprise to be told that German agents and money had fomented the rebellion, though saner French residents admit that the Miao had long wished to be ruled by their own rather than by Laosian chieftains. That was no unnatural demand, and by the terms of the peace now reigning between them and the French it has been granted. Nor does this change seem to put any great burden upon Miao justice, for in cases involving more than five piastres the contestants may appeal to the French authorities, whom they evidently trust more than they do their own chieftains. The end of the rebellion was typical of these stiff-necked mountaineers. The French issued an ultimatum that the Méo must submit by 9 p. m. on a certain day; and at 8:59 exactly, while the French commanders sat with their watches in their hands, the Miao chieftain strode in and capitulated. The puzzle still remains how a race without clocks managed to time themselves so dramatically. Now they seem quite friendly, though it is not they who put their palms together above their heads and come to the squat when a white man goes by."

"Languid as it is, Luang Prabang's history is not without its exciting moments. For its origin one must go back to that great Nan-chao kingdom, with its capital at Tali-fu in the southwestern corner of China, founded in 629 A. D. and destroyed six centuries later (1234), not by the Chinese but by their Mongol ruler, Kublai Khan. The Kingdom of the Divine Buddha is one of the remnant kingdoms of the great Tai race which, once holding a part of what is now China, was gradually driven west and south, losing or attaining culture until it varied from the high civilization of the Khmer to almost illiterate tribes, according to where its new lot was cast. Best known to the outside world by the Siamese word for man (lao), or as shan, from a Chinese word used in Burma, this people still prefers to be called Tai."

23: Franck--302-303

T-2

(1924) 1926

Laotians

116, 175, 361

"A traveler who visited Luang Prabang in 1872 found it the most compactly built city of Siam, with the single exception of Bangkok, which it in some respects resembled. But of several disasters the greatest seems to have been in 1887, when the Black Flags of Taiping days in China burned and almost completely destroyed and depopulated it, so that perhaps it is not by [303] choice of its up-and-coming citizens that it is so roomy, pastoral, and ideal a city to-day."

23: Franck--303

T-2

(1924) 1926

Laotians

116, 175, 648, 177.64

France

636.64

"The same altruism and love of their fellow-man that has given the French the arduous task of protecting the rest of Indo-China led to their present position in the affairs of Laos. About the time the Chinese from Yunnan were pillaging Luang Prabang kingdom a Frenchman named Pavie was sent there on a mission. The father of the present king, born Tiao Kham Souk, who lived from 1837 until 1904 and reigned under the name of Ritthithamaronjsac--though he was more popularly known as King Zacharine, and probably not entirely on account of his sweet disposition--was an absolute despot, descended from a long direct line of similar rulers. For the Kingdom of the Divine Buddha has been a kingdom as far back as the memory of its people goes. Zacharine became a great friend of Pavie, at least according to such data as was available in the French government offices of Luang Prabang, and when the Siamese failed to protect him, as they had promised, against the Chinese, he went to Siam under Pavie's wing; and later, in a quarrel with the Siamese, who had burned and looted and carried off most of the people of Vientiane and Xieng Khuang, he made the mistake, like his royal neighbors of Annam and Cambodia, of calling in the French. By 1893 Siam had been compelled to give up all claim to this ancient kingdom and to the magnificent highlands of Tran-ninh, and all Laos became a European dependency under the protection of France."

"Vieng-chan, which under the French has become Vientiane, is a place of former glory and power of the Tai race, capital of another of those kingdoms of earlier days. Its last great period of prosperity was between 1628 and 1652, after which civil wars dispersed its power and Luang Prabang declared its independence, though even in the eighteenth century it was still powerful. Then, in 1828, the Siamese destroyed the city, carried off and dispersed the people, and it has never been rebuilt. In 1893, when a treaty with Siam gave all Laos, all the land east of the Mekong and some west of it, to France, Vieng-chan became the French capital of Laos, as Luang Prabang is the chief native center."

"In the Mekong Valley, the Thai-speakers or Laos were long under Khmer suzerainty, although it is difficult to judge now to what extent the Khmers imposed their civilization in these outposts of their empire. But by the end of the twelfth century the northern [93] frontier of the Khmer realm stretched up to the site of the present-day Vientiane. However, a hundred years later, the Siamese rulers of Sukhothai, independent of the Khmers, extended their sovereignty to the Mekong's banks.

By the middle of the fourteenth century, we get a glimpse of the first independent Laotian ruler, one Fa-Ngum, said to have been a son-in-law of the Khmer king of Angkor. Fa-Ngum counts as the founder of the realm of Luang-Prabang, to which he imported Buddhist monks from Cambodia. But this later Cambodian influence does not seem to have been very far-reaching and certainly not long-lasting.

In the fifteenth century, Luang-Prabang had, for a time, to recognize the suzerainty of the Annamese ruler. In 1556, in 1563 and in 1571, the land of the Laos was, like all the Thai principalities, invaded by the expanding Burmese, who transferred the capital to Vientiane.

By the eighteenth century the Laotian lands were fallen apart and ruinous. Only the principalities of Luang-Prabang and of Vientiane retained their autonomy, but it was an autonomy menaced by the Siamese on the west and by the Annamese on the east. In fact, the Land of the Laos was being squeezed, as was the Land of the Khmers farther

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south, and there can be little doubt that had not Europeans intervened, both Cambodia and the Laos would have disappeared and the Siamese and the Annamese would have fought out who was to control the Mekong Valley.

In 1827, the Siamese invaded the realm of Vien-Tian, the 'Moon Province' (Vientiane) and annexed it to their country. The Siamese yoke was comparatively light, the conquerors respected the customs, the laws and the language of the conquered. In fact, Vientiane was held in peace for tribute. The Annamese emperors claimed a shadowy suzerainty over most of the remainder of the Laos' land, including the kingdom of Luang-Prabang."

"Luang-Prabang town stands at the northern limit of the Mekong's navigation and on the left bank at the foot of a pagoda hill that rises about two hundred feet above the plain on a jut of land round which the Nam-Kan curls to the Mekong. In 1887 the city was sacked by the Haw or 'Black Flag' Chinese 'Pirates' and in 1893, after the French occupation, the Siamese renewed their claim to the left bank of the Mekong (3) (which they

3. The Siamese undertook to keep the royal mausolea on the right bank open to visitors from Indo-China.

again claimed in 1940-41) including Luang-Prabang and the magnificent highlands of the Chieng-Kwang-- the right bank, however, remained Siamese until 1904 with a stipulation that a demilitarized zone of 16 kilometres wide should be maintained."

68: Mouhot--119-120

N-5

(1858-61) 1864

Laotians

116, 122, 175, 487

"To consult any existing maps of Indo-China for my guidance in the interior of Laos [HD: i. e. territory which is now central and northeastern Siam] would have been a folly, no traveller, at least to my knowledge, having penetrated into east Laos, or published any authentic information respecting it. To question the natives about places more than a degree distant would have been useless. My desire was to reach Louang-Prabang by land, to visit the northern tribes dependent on that state, and then again to descend the Mekong to Cambodia. Setting out from Korat, [HD: in Siam, northeast of Bangkok] I had but to proceed northwards as long as I found practicable roads and inhabited places; and if I could not go by a direct route to Louang-Prabang, I [120] should only have to diverge to the east when I judged it necessary."

115: Le Boulanger

AM1 Indochina
Laotians AM8

● 175

[For the history of Laos, see category 116, throughout.]

China Geographical Service /Service géographique de l'Indochine/ 131
and the road surveys made by administrators at the heads of prov- 654
inces nevertheless agree substantially in estimating the area of
Laos at approximately 250,000 square kilometers, or about half
that of France.

Population. This is the largest of the five countries in French 161
Indo-China, and it is also the least densely populated. According
to information collected on the spot, the population must be be- /162/
tween a million and 1,200,000 inhabitants, a figure appreciably
larger than the one figuring in the official documents, which esti-
mate it to be only 800,000. Persons of the Laotian race in the
strict /3/ sense form the majority. They populate the plains 162
which are watered by the Mékong and its tributaries and the low
altitude plateaus. The mountains are inhabited by highly diverse
races belonging to various ethnic types, some of which are related
to the Chinese, and others to the Tibetan branch, while still others
are grouped under the generic name of "Khas." These various
groups are scattered over the western side of the Annamitic Chain,
the foothills of the plateau of Tràn-Ninh and in the upper valley of
the Mékong.

The extremely low population density is to be explained by the 162
Siamese and Chinese invasions in the course of the nineteenth 166
century. The "Hos," plunderers who came from Yunnan, massa- 648*
cred the inhabitants after they had burned their villages and forced 175
those who escaped famine or torture to settle in another region.
The Siamese proceeded in a more methodical manner and depopu-
lated the country by transporting inhabitants, livestock and ele-
phants to the right bank of the Mekong and oftentimes taking them
as far as the valley of the Ménam.

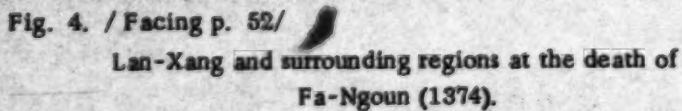
Upper Laos. Upper Laos, a ramification of the Tibetan pla- 133
teau, "is an inextricable tangle /4/ of wild and wooded moun-
tains in the midst of which paths wind like gigantic Russian
mountains" (1). The country has a savage look. These high 133
137

1. Dr. Lefèvre, "Le Haut-Laos" (Bulletin de la Société de
Géographie commerciale, 1898).

mountain chains, which are cut here and there by deep valleys
where torrents which are often invisible flow, are covered with



Fig. 2. /Facing p. 23/



643* merchandise).

648* His life was also a short one. He died at the age of thirty-three,

175* handing down the crown to an only son born two years after his accession to the throne.

SOM-PHOU (1488-1502), KING 1496-1501.

643* This child, Som-Phou, who gave only his name to his reign, was

175 removed from power by the ministers, for reasons unknown, when he reached the age of thirteen. He then died in the following year.

/71/ VISOUN (1467), KING 1501-1520.

643* His uncle Phé-Sai (1) was summoned to the throne in his place in

175

1. Next to the last son of Tiakaphat.

/821/ 1501. According to the Annals, the sky was streaked with lightning and thundered unceasingly on the coronation day. Struck by this phenomenon, in which they saw a manifestation of divine satisfaction, the Council of Ministers gave him the name of Phaya-Visoun (lightning)

/787/ In 1506 a son was born to him who was named Phothisarath in consequence of a dream which Visoun's mother had a few days before the queen's delivery. "Banyans in flower (Kok-Pho) had appeared to her in which innumerable birds warbled joyfully." When consulted, the priests predicted that the expected child would be a Saint, and in the royal family everyone rejoiced at the thought that the newborn would come into the world under the sign of the sacred tree in whose shade Buddha had attained the triple science and found the secret of the destinies.

346 In order to magnify in anticipation, so to speak, the marvelous

643* events of his reign, King Visoun built many temples around his palace.

175* /72/ The foundations of a pagoda which was erected under his auspices to the memory of a daughter who had died young can still be seen today in Luang-Prabang (1).

1. Another pagoda, "Posot-Luang," which was located on the present site of the ice-house, has completely disappeared. Great celebrations were held there in honor of the birth of Phothisarath.

643* PHOTHISARATH (1506), KING 1520-1547.

His son Phothisarath, who succeeded him in 1520, was an extremely

643* through the mouth of his chancellor and never speaks to them ex-
576 cept through a go-between. . . "

643* A "Trojan War" in Tran-Ninh (1651-1652). Under the firm hand
648* of such a monarch, the vassals and tributary princes eagerly com-
175 plied with the slightest of their sovereign's orders. Great was the
584 astonishment, therefore, when it was learned in 1651 that Chao-
Kham-Xan, king of Xieng-Khouang, whom Souligna had asked for
the hand of his daughter Nang-Ken-Chan in marriage, had dared to
reply that the princess was not free and that he declined the honor of
this alliance. Enflamed by the accounts which had been given him
of the beauty and wisdom of the "pearl" of Tran-Ninh, the king of
Lan-Xang pretended not to notice the affront but gallantly persisted
and sent a messenger to take rich gifts to the girl. In vain. Then
Souligna sent for the princess manu militari. The detachment was
brought to an abrupt halt by the troops of King Chao-Kham-Xan and
had to retrace its steps, while the people of Xieng-Khouang foresaw
the worst and hastily built a fortress at Pana to protect their capi-
tal (1).

1. Cf. Captain de Pelacot, *op. cit.* / "Le Tran-Ninh
historique." *Revue indochinoise*. Hanoi, 1896. /

643* Souligna decided that a small army of two thousand men would
648* be enough to punish Chao-Kham-Xan for his insolence. This force
721 did in fact take the stronghold of Pana by surprise and penetrate into
175* Xieng-Khouang on a bridge /118/ thrown over the ramparts. The
king, a prisoner in his own palace, had to give in. But although he
surrendered to force he kept a stubborn rancor over this misadventure
which was inherited by his son Chao-Kham-Lan who succeeded him
in 1688. This prince raised a thousand difficulties in paying the
traditional tribute to Lan-Xang, and friendly relations between the
two sister states were ended for good and all. In the eighteenth cen-
tury Xieng-Khouang was to be engaged in a permanent struggle with
Souligna's successors, and in the nineteenth century Chao-Noi, a
king of Tran-Ninh, was to deliver up the unfortunate king Anou, the
last monarch of Vientiane, to Siam.

643* But let us not anticipate further on these events but rather re-
175* turn to the year 1652, when Lan-Xang was shining with all its
splendor and when the minor expedition in Xieng-Khouang meant
no more to its king than a simple demonstration of his power and his
authority.

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Fig. 9. The Indo-Chinese Peninsula at the Dawn of the Eighteenth Century.

/Facing p. 142/

been the vassal of Annam and used to pay a triennial tribute. The Tayson revolt forced it to submit to the Siamese, who are mistreating the people. Today, seeing the glory and power of Emperor Gia-Long, the prince of Vientiane asks to serve Annam once again and to pay tribute as in the past. The embassy was received in a solemn audience by Gia-Long, who questioned it at length on the administration of the country, and was sent back, after a month's stay, with magnificent gifts. . . . The ambassadors brought back to the prince of Vientiane a letter from Gia-Long conceived in the following terms: 'Your predecessor Chao-In was my vassal, and my policy with respect to your kingdom has always been marked by gentleness and goodwill. Remain faithful to your duty and show yourself ever humane towards your people, and you will thereby comply with my wishes.' The question of tribute was settled. It was to be paid every three years, and the time of payment set in such a way that the embassy responsible for bringing it might greet the king during the holiday of the Tet." (Cf. Annals of the court of Hue.)

to /161/ detach Luang-Prabang from Bangkok (1). After the Bassac

1. See below, p. 201.

campaign he had sent Chao-Ngo to fortify Oubone. A triple-entrenched camp was built there and recruits trained, supposedly to defend Siam against any attack from inside or outside.

In Vientiane, he governed in the midst of a brilliant court, The city of Setthathirath and Soulligna, although fallen from its former splendor, still contained more than ten thousand families and prided itself on its royal /162/ palace (1) and its many pagodas

1. When the Doudart de Lagree mission visited the city in 1867 the mass of its fallen stones stretched from the Prakeo to the ruins -- which were then still imposing -- of the Wat-Kang. (De Came, op. cit. /Voyage en Indochine et dans l'empire chinois, Paris, 1872./) See above, p. 122, the account by Father Marini.

whose gilt glittered above the walls of its fortifications. In 1818

- 369 Anou had built the new temple of Sisaket not far from the deconsecrated
175 Prakeo "with the purpose of attracting the grace of Heaven
/346/ to the souls of his parents as well as to those of all his relatives and
to all the souls which people Hell and the world" (2). The corner-

2. Cf. inscription on the stele.

stone was laid on "Thursday, the ninth day of the waxing moon of the year Kap-San" (1824), in the midst of a large assembly of the populace.

- 778 Inauguration of the temple of Sisaket (1824). On this occasion
796 the king made innumerable gifts to the bonzes (clothing, sandals,
346 fans, iron pen points to write on latania leaves, mats, mattresses,
175* copper betel services, rice baskets, vases, metal drinking cups, carafes, goblets, etc.). He gave /163/ pieces of cloth to the poor, and generous bounties to artisans and musicians. The people walked in procession around the royal palace, carrying oriflammes and effigies of animals which were flowered and perfumed with incense. The holiday lasted three days, to the accompaniment of general rejoicing (1).

1. Ibid. /Inscription on the stele. /

- 346 This temple was the only one which the French found still standing when they reached Vientiane. Of the first enclosure there remain two 'thats', which have recently been restored, and an elegant square pavilion-library whose quadruple pinnacled roof is supported by a graceful colonnade. Three other pavilions have disappeared (2).

2. A bath pavilion, one for worship and one for the tombs and gongs.

- /532/ A cloister pierced by a porch on each side surrounds the central sanctuary, the outer gallery of which discloses a gateway and finely worked windows under the triple porch roofs. The inside walls are illuminated by frescoes surmounted by many niches in the form of lotus leaves where thousands of statuettes are grouped in pairs. A wooden ceiling is embellished with gilded panels, and on the altar stands a giant Buddha entirely covered with gold leaf.

The attempt on Keng-Kiec (June 2, 1893). In Cammon 648*
Resident Luce persuaded the Pra Yott (1) to evacuate the capital, 175

1. See above, pp. 287 and 288.

with apparent resignation, and decided that a detachment of twenty militiamen under Inspector Groscurin would be enough to escort him back and protect him, for the Siamese commissioner was heartily detested by the populace, whom he had been molesting for four years (2). But the Pra Yott had secretly asked for reinforce-

2. Cf. Mission Pavie, Vol. VII, pp. 333-334.

ments by rapid courier from the governors of Nongkhay and Outene, and on June 2, profiting by a halt at Kieng-Kiec, he had the little force surrounded by three hundred Siamese soldiers. The house where the French inspector was lying was riddled with rifle fire, while the latter lay delirious where he had been stricken two days ago by a violent fever. . .

Only three militiamen escaped from the fusillade. All the rest of the escort was massacred, its leader was hit by two bullets and the house where his body lay was burned.

News of this attack stirred up enough emotion in France to "determine the government /310/ to substitute its own action for that of the Indo-Chinese authorities. But to its protests and to the sending of M. Le Myre de Vilers as plenipotentiary to Bangkok, Siam replied by claiming that the ambush at Keng-Kiec was a regular battle and by placing the mouth of the Menam in a state of defense" (1).

1. On June 28 it sank two old ships to the right and left of the pass of Paknam so as to narrow it.

Forcing the pass of Paknam (July 12, 1893). Admiral Humann, commander of the China naval division, was then hastily summoned to Saigon and two warships -- the sloop Inconstant (Frigate Captain Bory) and the gunboat Comete (Lieutenant Commander Dartige du Fournet) -- were immediately dispatched to Bangkok. On July 8 Pavie informed the court that these two ships were coming to reinforce the Lutin which had been anchored in the Menam since March and requested, in accordance with Article 15 of the treaty of

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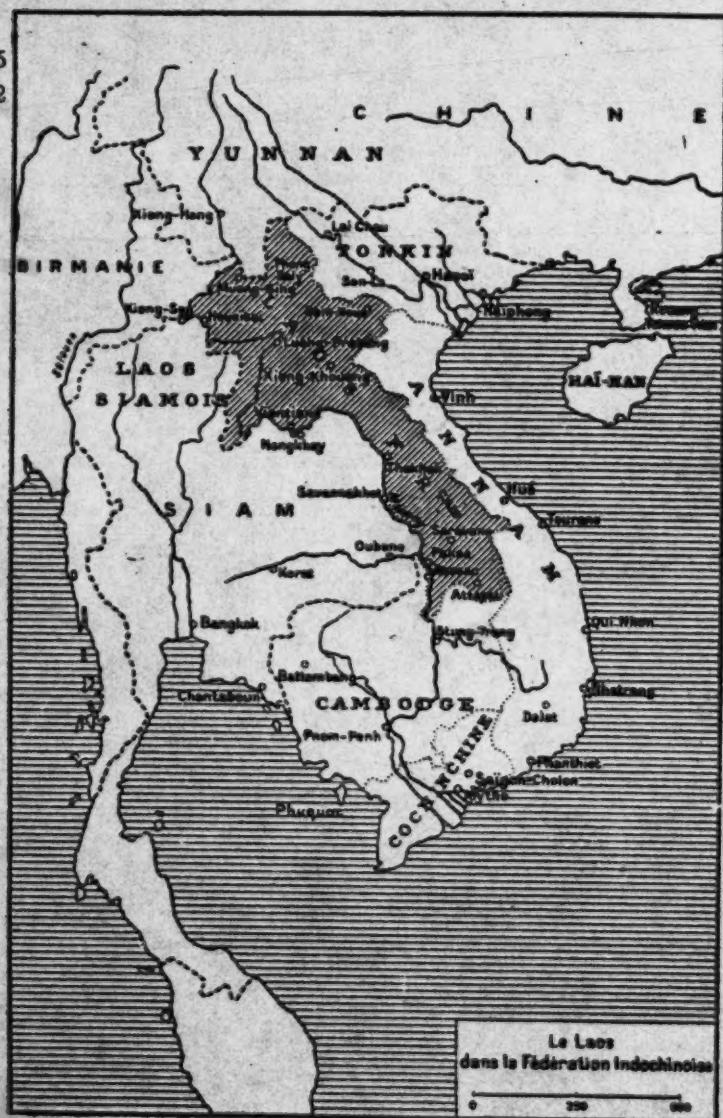


Fig. 19. Laos in the Indo-Chinese Federation.

/Facing p. 341/

[1]

[Illustration here]

CHAPTER I

175 THE POLITICAL STATUS OF LAOS FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE
101 EIGHTEENTH CENTURY TO THE CAPTURE OF VIEN-TIANE IN 1827
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At the beginning of the eighteenth century the territories situated in the basin of the Mékong River were designated by the name of Laos or Lao, and from the political point of view formed two autonomous States.

Their autonomy was much more apparent than real, and existed in fact only for the internal administration of the two kingdoms. As far as their foreign relations went, they were tributaries of the more powerful nations which surrounded them.

The kingdom of Luang-Prabang (or Lan-Xang--of the million elephants) was the northernmost of the two and bordered on Yunnan, Tonkin, Annam, Vien-Tiane (or Vieng-Chang), the Burmese States [2] (or Sib-Song-Pahn-Na) and the You-Eun States (or Lao-Xieng). It was supposed to provide China, Annam and Siam, either annually or every three years, with tribute consisting of certain valuable products and of precious metals, and called "Gold and silver flowers."

The other, or kingdom of Vien-Tiane, was the southernmost and was bordered on the north by Luang-Prabang, on the east by Annam, on the south by Cambodia and on the west by Siam. It was the tributary of Annam and Siam in the same right and under the same conditions as the first.

This state of affairs was profoundly modified in the beginning and middle of the nineteenth century by various events of capital importance.

175 At the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the
648 nineteenth the Thai kingdom, or Siam, had often appealed to the
726 Laotian princes for help in repulsing Burmese invasions or repressing the insurrections of Ngélous, Shans and You-Eûns which were frequent at this time. The princes' devotion was ill rewarded. Around 1825, in fact, when the kingdom of Vien-Tiane seemed to want to shake off Siamese suzerainty, it saw its territory invaded by Siamese armies. After two years of war the land had been dismembered, depopulated

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and stripped of its livestock and elephants, which were taken to the Ménam valley, and had been fully conquered by the Thai sovereign.

Siam then created the hereditary fief of Tiama-Sak (Bassac) in the southeast of the former kingdom and placed a cousin of the king of Vien-Tiane over it in order to reward him for his double treachery towards the king and towards his brother, the prince of Oubone, both of whom he had delivered up to the Siamese general Phiéa-Le-Bô-Dyn, vanquisher of the Laotians.

Of the former kingdom of Vien-Tiane Siam made a Siamese province bearing the name Lao-Pou-Eün and, completely ignoring Annam's rights, it had its troops occupy the basin of the Sé-Bang-Hien in the Phu of Kam-Lô, which was situated on the left bank of the Mékong.

[3] SIAM'S ENCROACHMENTS TO THE EAST
 GROUNDS FOR FRENCH INTERVENTION IN THE MÉKONG BASIN
 ARRANGEMENT OF MARCH 27, 1889

Siamese expansion was not limited to these conquests. Thanks to a skillful policy, it was awarded the provinces of Mèlou-Prey and Tonlé-Répon, located on both banks of the Mékong, by Cambodia about 1840. Following their annexation Siam reigned as master over the whole basin of the river from the province of Outhai-Thani-Si-Pak-Lay (Luang-Prabang) to Siemboc, that is to say, from the eighteenth to the thirteenth parallel.

But the establishment of the French in Cochinchina placed an obstacle in the way of Siamese ambitions and of any plans for conquest which they may have nurtured. Since Cambodia was the hinterland of our new possession we were led to intervene in its foreign relations and finally guarantee it a stable political situation. Here a word of praise may well be said for Admiral de La Grandière who, by his diplomatic skill and his steadfastness, was able in 1863 to impose a treaty on King Norodom which counterbalanced another Siam-Kmer agreement of the same year and placed the kingdom of Cambodia under a French protectorate. (1)

(1) See Appendix I.

This accord was far from being satisfactory to Siam, for the introduction of a great European nation in the Far East, on the banks

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648 of the Mékong, with effective dominance over several millions of individuals, meant the ruin of its secret hopes. What is more, its plans for territorial expansion up to the Annamitic Chain found in us adversaries to be reckoned with. It also feared that Cambodia, which was already our ally and strong by virtue of its new status, might claim the territories of which it had been despoiled.

Since it could not enter into open struggle against us, Siam stealthily sowed discords in the Kmer kingdom and, [4] in co-operation with the British agents in Bangkok, schemed to create palace revolutions and thereby try to induce the versatile Norodom to abandon our protection for a Siamese vassaldom which would be stricter than before but disguised under the appearance of great honor.

So as not to lose all the fruits of our action, and to bring an end to the ambiguous status of a double protectorate--French and Siamese--in Cambodia, our government had to take strong action. It was then that the Franco-Siamese treaty of July 15, 1867, was concluded(1).

(1) See Appendix II.

Despite many irreparable errors, this treaty sanctioned Siam's recognition of the French protectorate over Cambodia, annulled the Siam-Kmer agreement of 1863, established the status quo as a policy, granted to nationals of both countries reciprocal facilities for trade, residence, property, travel, navigation and passports, set up rules governing jurisprudence, etc.

Unfortunately it gave Siam the rich provinces of Battambang and Angkor (2), with vague provisions for later delimitation of

(2) At the beginning of the nineteenth century Siam had purely and simply annexed these provinces, without any treaty having sanctioned the coup.

these territories. The comparative calm of this period made it possible to settle various matters for good and all which had theretofore been left hanging.

149: Reinach--4 G-3 (no date) 1901 AM1 Indochina

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Thus the agreement of July 14, 1870, regulated fishing conditions on the Great Lake [Grand Lac] (3). In 1882 it was decided to set up

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(3) See Appendix III.

a telegraph line between Bangkok and Phnom-Penh (4). And finally,

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(4) See Appendix IV.

on May 23, 1883, an agreement was reached which regulated the commerce and sale of French wines and spirits in Siam (5).

(5) See Appendix V.

This fine state of affairs soon took a turn for the worse at the time of the Tonkin expedition.

The agents of Great Britain in Siam were afraid that our penetration into the valley of the Red River and into Upper Laos [5] [Illustration] [6] [Blank page] [7] would hinder British plans for commercial establishments in Yunnan and would prevent British predominance in the two Kouang. Since they were bent on preserving their influence in this region, they induced the Siamese sovereign to act first on the Chinese frontiers, where he was to bar out progress, and then in Laos with Annam as the objective, in the hope that he might create difficulties for us and perhaps succeed in concluding some form of alliance against us.

The king's pride was flattered by his foreign advisers. Feeling that he was to play the part of the sovereign of a "great nation," he abandoned his prudent reserve, no longer kept the balance equal between the rival nations, and began his adventurous course. These were his first steps towards great disappointments, and also towards territorial losses such as those resulting from the treaty of 1893 and the London convention of 1896.

Circumstances at the time, moreover, seemed to favor Siam's action and even to excuse its behavior in some measure.

The invasion of Laos by the Hs (1) enabled the sovereign of

(1) Chinese bandits from Yunnan,

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726 Siam to preserve an appearance of neutrality, and even of cordiality, towards us.

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175 It gave him the opportunity to pose as the defender of Annam's vassals and of the subjects of his most honorable vassal the king of Luang-Prabang. When the time came King Chulalong-Khorn would thus be able to profit skilfully, and according to the circumstances, from the advantages which he had gained in order to transform an ill-founded vassal-~~dom~~ over Luang-Prabang into an absolute possession and, thanks to our difficulties, to impose the law of greater might all the way to the Annamitic Chain.

[726] The Hô invasion, which extended all the way to Nong-Khay across the Sib-Song-Chau-Thaf, the Hae-Pahn-Ha-Tang-Hoc, Tran-Ninh and Vien-Tiane, was never seriously opposed by the Siamese no matter what they may say. Their pretended action did, however, enable the king to keep Vien-Tiane and to drive the Chinese bandits out of Laotian territory.

[8] The whole affair may have created some momentary illusion, but the actual fact was that Chulalong-Khorn's troops, except for a few rare and unimportant skirmishes, merely followed the Hô's as they returned towards Yunnan and abandoned the territories which they had invaded after they had sacked them.

Profiting by inattention on the part of France and Annam, which were occupied [Illustration here] elsewhere, and on the fallacious pretext that it was protecting the provinces which had been devastated by the Hô's and was preventing them from returning in the future, Siam covertly established itself as master in the land.

In the meantime the Chinese bandits, after leaving Vien-Tiane and Tran-Ninh, invaded the kingdom of Luang-Prabang. The latter still paid tribute to Siam, in the form of "Gold and silver flowers," yet it had remained free of direct domination and enjoyed an autonomy comparable to [Map, unpagged, inserted between pp. 8 and 9] [9] that of Vien-Tiane before its conquest, and paid an honorary bounty to China and Annam.

Still on the pretext of driving out the Hô's, the Siamese troops entered the territory of Luang-Prabang and established themselves there as in a conquered land. Their general was given the title of royal commissioner. He administered the country, recruited troops, levied [Illustration here] taxes and behaved exactly as if the country belonged to him (1885).

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Such overt acts were the certain prelude to a more complete annexation, and finally shook off our torpor and quickened our vigilance.

Since the king of Annam, our new protégé, had rights over this region which were equal and in several cases superior to those of Siam, our intervention became necessary. It resulted in the treaty of May 7, 1886 (1).

(1) See Appendix VI.

[10] So that the treaty should not remain mere words, the Government of the French Republic sent M. Pavie (1) on a geographical and

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(1) Now minister plenipotentiary.

political mission in Upper Laos and named him consul in Luang-Prabang, but without Siam's exequatur.

The work of this first mission provided precious information on all the regions invaded by the Hôis and later occupied by the Siamese. With the help of Commander Pennequin (2), our valiant consul

(2) Now brigadier general; former interim governor general of Madagascar.

succeeded in driving the last bandits back to China and made the advance outposts which had been established by the Siamese withdraw to the far limits of the Mékong basin. Turning this situation to their profit, and now strong in the knowledge which they had acquired, our diplomats concluded with the court of Bangkok, so as to be able to face any difficult eventuality in the future, as well as to give us time for reflection, the arrangement of March 27, 1889, by the terms of which Siam agreed to respect the status quo (3).

(3) "By the terms of this agreement the Siamese troops were to halt their eastward march, and then evacuate the region of Cammon. A Siamese 'Kha-luong' was allowed to remain in this province for the time being, and we obtained the right to construct a military post at Napé." E. Picanon, 1900. Le Laos français.

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SIAM'S VIOLATION OF THE 1889 ARRANGEMENT
VARIOUS INCIDENTS
OCCUPATION OF LOWER LAOS--NAVAL DEMONSTRATION AT
PAK-NAM
ULTIMATUM AND TREATY OF OCTOBER 3, 1893

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The arrangement of 1889 was unfortunately much too lenient. Even several years after the fall of the great and clairvoyant patriot Jules Ferry, however, and as a consequence of the profound discredit into which the whole colonial idea and cause had fallen among us, our political situation made it impossible for us to take more effective measures and to assert the rights of our protégé, the emperor of Annam, in a more pressing way. [11] Nor could we give full satisfaction to the completely legitimate requests for protection which were made by the king of Luang-Prabang.

Our political difficulties were perfectly well-known to the Siamese government. Emboldened by our hesitation, it consented, in agreement with Great Britain, to arrangements and delimitations of frontiers in the Shan States which annihilated the plan conceived by Jules Ferry in 1883 and canceled all the results of the Deloncle treaty concluded in 1884 (1) with Upper Burma, which was then

(1) See Appendices VII and VIII.

independent. This treaty, in effect, recognized as limits of "French Tonkin the Mékong River, from the point where it leaves China as far as Xieng-Sèn," including the Pahn-Na on the left bank, the principality of Muong-Sing and the States of Pou-Kha, Xieng-Khong and Xieng-Sèn to the west of Nam-Hou.

In exchange for this territory--a gracious gift which cost it all the less in that it did not belong to it--Great Britain obtained Karenné (or Karèng) from Siam. The latter territory was situated in the valley of the Salouen, and had been under Siamese domination for centuries.

The delimitation of the Anglo-Siamese frontiers, including those of the Shan States of Xieng-Maf, Lam-Poun and Muong-Haut, was completed only in 1892.

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In 1889 M. Pavle was sent on another mission and was accompanied by many civil and military assistants whose particular province was to be topography and the natural sciences. A

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commercial and industrial mission was attached to the former, and it was to study the question of means of communication by land and river, to create trading posts, to collect samples, to examine the commercial methods in use and to determine the nature and value of the products of the Mékong basin. Funds for this mission, which left France with an initial stock of fifteen tons of various kinds of merchandise, were provided by a syndicate which had just been formed, with an initial capital of 100,000 francs, under the name of French Syndicate [12] of Upper Laos. It included representatives of Parisian trade and industry who had united for the experiment thanks to the initiative of M. Léon Tharel, the president of the group.

All throughout 1890 and 1891 the missions fulfilled their tasks with ardor, not without constant struggle against the implicit hostility of the Siamese, which although occasionally concealed under an [Illustration here] affable outward mask nonetheless continued to manifest itself and created obstacles everywhere in the hope of discouraging the valiant explorers and causing their work to fail.

In spite of the difficulties which they encountered, the two missions were successful in their delicate enterprise and the results of the latter were most significant. From that point on we were in possession of precise information concerning the whole region extending from Yunnan to Cambodia.

What was more, by continuing the tradition begun by Mouhot, the [13] Lagrée mission, Harmand, Néls, etc. we had made contact with the Laotian people and made them know and love the French name. In us they saluted their future liberators and the ones who would come to free them from the brutal and detested Siamese yoke.

Finally--a fact of no less importance--thanks to the activities of the commercial mission, to the trading posts which it had established and to the contacts and arrangements which it had prepared, we were in possession from that time on of private commercial interests in the Mékong basin. Thus greater force was given to the rights which we already had to intervene in Laos against Siamese intrigues in the name of our protégés, the emperor of Annam and the king of Cambodia.

Frightened and surprised by the results which France had achieved in so short a time in the Mékong valley, despite the ambushes which it had laid on all sides and the hostile maneuvers which it had supported, Siam began to fear that France might invade its Laotian territories. It then invoked the friendship of Great Britain and

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surrounded itself with official advisers from that nations.

In a short time, and with remarkable rapidity, it organized an army and navy which were trained and commanded by European officers. It reinforced all its detachments in Laos, levied additional troops, and after providing supplies of arms and munitions it constructed forts. In a word, it prepared for war. It announced to the people that all these steps had been taken in order to "drive out the French and extend the Thai kingdom into Annam."

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The 1889 arrangement establishing a status quo was then violated. Siamese troops and commissioners advanced towards the Annamitic Chain and crossed it at several points, particularly at Hatraf and Al-Lao, and thus reached a point only forty kilometers from Hué. In the course of their forward march various incidents occurred which obliged the French Government to abandon the reserve which it had heretofore maintained when confronted with the intrigues of the court of Bangkok. At last it made ready to act vigorously.

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In January 1892 the greater number of the members of [14] the Pavie mission had returned to France. Only three of them had remained in Laos, two in Luang-Prabang and one in Stung-Treng.

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It was at this time that the French Syndicate of Upper Laos, which had become the French Syndicate of Laos and had doubled its capital, sent out a new six-man mission as well as a large stock of merchandise. Its purpose was to reoccupy the old trading posts in Luang-Prabang and Nong-Khay and to found new ones at Bassac, Outhène and Xieng-Hong in a line along the Mékong. Its activity would thus extend from Cambodia to Yunnan. The Syndicate's new mission was to support and strengthen the commercial interests already in existence in the Mékong basin. It also placed vigilant agents in all the posts who would be able to keep an eye on the maneuvers of the Siamese and instil confidence in the people by showing them that in spite of Siam's threats and warlike preparations we should not abandon them. The Laotians were thus conscious of our support at a time when their invaders were becoming harsher and more arrogant and were threatening to extract reprisals from them as a punishment for having placed their trust in us and solicited our protection.

In these critical circumstances the Government decided to place a consul general in Bangkok so as to render France's political action in Siam more effective. It chose M. Pavie to occupy this high post.

both for his special knowledge of the country and the questions at issue and as a reward for the exceptional service which he had rendered to France in the course of his previous missions. Shortly thereafter, so as to place our chief agent in Siam on the same level as those of other nations, the title of Resident Minister of France was conferred on him.

At the same time, in order to extend our activity in the Mékong basin, the Government discontinued the vice-consulate in Luang-prabang, which had always remained without Siam's "exequatur", and replaced it with a commercial agency. Three other agencies of the same type were established in Outhène, Bassac and Stung-Treng.

The first three of these posts were managed by the agents, [15] [Illustration] [16] [Blank page] [Unpaged map inserted between pp. 16 and 17] [17] who were heads of trading posts in the French Syndicate, and the last was managed by a chief clerk in the Posts and Telegraphs. They were given the title of commercial agents of the Government and, even while they continued to carry on commercial operations, they received salaries from the Colonies budget. They corresponded directly with the Governor General of Indo-China and the Resident Minister in Bangkok, to whom they sent telegrams and official reports.

Meanwhile the Siamese, thinking that they were to be permitted to do anything and secretly impelled by the British agents, continued to advance eastward terrorizing the people and mistreating our subjects, protégés and nationals in Siam as well as in Laos and in Cambodia, in the region of Great Lake [Grand Lac].

Their audacity reached its climax in a serious offense to our flag in Tong-Kieng-Kham, and the accumulation of all these grievances drove the French Government to vigorous action. Following an interruption and a patriotic speech by M. Deloncle, a deputy, the Chamber decided to safeguard the rights of our protégés and to recall Siam to respect for the treaties and arrangements which had been agreed on. The following are the terms in which M. Deloncle placed the question before Parliament on February 4, 1893. [C. A. M. Translator's note. The following speech (through p. 17, line 5 in this translation) is presumably taken from French legislative records. It is set in small, contrasting type in the source.]

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President. --M. Deloncle has the floor.

M. François Deloncle. --Gentlemen, after the brilliant speeches which you have just heard I believe that the Chamber is in some haste to close the general discussion. I have therefore come simply to ask the Government a few questions.

The first of these questions supplements the observations which my honorable colleagues and friends the Messrs. Martineau and Le Roy have addressed to the tribune concerning the encroachments of the Siamese on our Indo-Chinese empire.

The Siamese are ignorant or pretend to be ignorant of Annam's rights over its old vassal, the principality of Luang-Prabang. The Siamese are ignorant or pretend to be ignorant of Annam's rights over the small Laotian States to the north of old Cambodia on the right bank of the Mékong, some of which used to send, up until the last few years, tribute to Hué. The Siamese are ignorant or wish to be ignorant of Annam's absolute rights over all the territory situated between the sea and the left bank of the Mékong, that is to say the lands of Attopeu and Saravane, the plus of Cam-~~bo~~, Lac-bien and Tran-tinh, Tran-dinh, Tran-ninh, Tran-bien, Muong-lu, etc., which from time immemorial have been a part of [18] the Annamite empire and must be purely and simply attached to the direct administration of our residences. Finally, the Siamese are ignorant or pretend to be ignorant of Cambodia's rights over the old provinces of the Cambodian kingdom which Siam holds illegally and in spite of the treaty of 1867, which provides for a delimitation of frontiers which the court of Bangkok has always refused to consider.

It is in this way that, patiently and noiselessly, the Siamese are usurping one by one all the dependencies of our protégés, the emperor of Annam and King Norodom. In vain do our protégés protest and clamor for our protection against this invasion. We have let matters take their course, in the last few years, with such an appearance of resignation that Siamese audacity is growing every-day and that good patriots are worriedly asking how far it may not go. Look at the Siamese outposts at the gates of Hué. These they are a few days away from Hanoi. They do not hesitate to treat our political agents with the most perfect scorn and to mistreat our traders, as witness the expulsion from Houten of M. Champenois who is claiming on these grounds, and not without reason, an indemnity of 100,000 francs. To put it bluntly, the weakness of our representatives and sometimes of our Government in these regions is so great that two

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Siamese functionaries were not at all afraid, in September 1891, to tear down the French flag at the Pouens. Not only were they not bothered, but one of them received the rosette of officer of the Legion of Honor and the other was made a chevalier through the diplomacy of the Republic. (Various movements.)

Truly, it seems to me that we have been too long-suffering. It is not possible that we should have conquered Cambodia, Tonkin and Annam, and acquired rights over all of Laos on both banks of the Mékong, by virtue of solemn and undisputed treaties, only to abandon the best fruits of our conquest to Siam. We have been the dupes of Siam for five or six years, and that is enough.

Let us return to the virile policy which, in 1882, under M. Harmand as consul general and under the administration of the honorable M. Le Myre de Vilers, placed Siam under our influence because France then knew how to speak clearly and not beat about the bush. Let us remind Siam of the limits to which it must confine itself and which it respected very well until the expedition of the Hô, until our war in Tonkin and until the Cambodian rebellion of Si-Votha.

Doubtless there were, during this period, a few Siamese mandarins who occasionally went in search of adventure among the Laotians of the Mékong, but this was pure tolerance on the part of the Cambodians and Annamites and there was not, as there are today, brothers of the king and generals in chief camped as absolute masters on both banks of the river. The regular and official administration of the court of Bangkok did not go beyond the Ménam basin in the strict sense and the Malay Peninsula, and the kingdom contained only those provinces listed in the four classes reproduced by the printed laws of Siam, of which the Siam Directory, the official annual, [19] gives authentic extracts which are published under the supervision of the king himself. This document is absolutely conclusive. Let us bring Siam back to it. Let it reign in peace, in full integrity and independence, over the provinces listed in the Siam Directory, but let it no longer attempt to establish itself with impunity in the territories dependent on our empire.

Do not fear, Mr. Undersecretary of State, to impress on Bangkok our determined intention not to be made fools of any longer by the pleasant smiles, the lulling diplomacy and the complicated intrigues with which, since 1884, the best intentions of our agents have been paralyzed. (Hear! Hear!)

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648 The Siamese are like all the other people of the Orient. They believe that they are strong because we have accustomed them to regard themselves as such. They have a great deal of pride, because we have been and are too humble towards them. They make much, in their dealings with us, of pretended aid which they confidently expect from England or from Germany. But I ask you, gentlemen, what can England or Germany have to say in a question of frontiers between Siam, Cambodia and Annam which has to do only with France? Are we concerned in the frontier delimitation now in progress in the Shan-Burmese States between Siam and Britain? Have we ever for a single instant hindered German or Italian commercial activity in Bangkok?

No, gentlemen, there are no international interests involved in this matter. We have only one question to settle with Britain in this region, that of the upper Mékong from the point where this river leaves China upstream from Xieng-hong to the point in Xieng-sen where it touches the northwest frontier of Siam. There, as you know, the left bank of the Mékong constitutes the limit between French Tonkin and the Shan-Burmese States, by the terms of the Burmese declaration which I brought back in 1884 from Mandalay, and by the terms of other arrangements which enabled the honorable M. Ribot, then minister of Foreign Affairs, to declare before the Chamber two years ago that he would never accept any other frontier line between Tonkin and the Shan-Burmese States which depend on Britain.

I shall add only that, since that time, Lord Salisbury has admitted in the House of Lords that his government could not possibly have anything to say in the frontier difficulties pending between Siam and France. Our hands are therefore free, on condition that we respect the integrity and independence of Siam in the strict sense.

The Government well knows what measures are to be taken under the present conditions, and I defer to the resolute spirit of my honorable friend the Undersecretary of State.

These will not be extensive military measures for, and you will learn this not without some surprise, Siam has accomplished its work of invasion with the aid of a mere 150 or 200 Siamese soldiers. With this small number of troops they are occupying a region larger than half of France.

[20] You must admit, gentlemen, that it would be enough merely to turn to with a good will and have a genuine consciousness of France's rights, in order to restore order once again. Unfortunately

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I fear that our agents all too often lack this genuine consciousness.
(Hear: Hear:)

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Once that we had decided to intervene in Indo-China, operations were begun at three different points: in the region of Ai-Lao, in Cammon and in the north of Cambodia.

Our agents remained isolated in the Mékong valley.

Those of Luang-Prabang, who had taken refuge in the buildings of the old consulate on the right bank of the Mékong, were proscribed, blockaded and besieged. Threats of death were made against all natives who should enter into contact with them or serve them in any way whatever.

Our commercial agent in Outhène was expelled by order of the viceroy of Nong-Khay, and his merchandise was first confiscated and then almost all sold by the Siamese. The agent in Bassac escaped similar treatment thanks only to the goodwill of Prince Prit-Chit, the viceroy of Oubone and a friend of France, and they were content merely to keep a close watch on him. He was guarded so closely that he could neither send nor receive correspondence or merchandise.

The instructions given out by M. de Lanessan, the Governor General of Indo-China, for the campaign which was beginning were quite clear. He directed that open battle should be avoided insofar as possible. He said that we must seek to gain the sympathies of the inhabitants and always prefer diplomacy and peaceful means to uncertain military engagements. In order to attain this end, the Governor General recommended the use of native troops commanded by inspectors of the militia and placed under the higher authority of a few chosen residents.

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It was in this capacity that Messrs. Luce, Dufrénil and Bastard took part in the operations.

One column, with Muong-Phin as its objective, was placed under the command of M. Dufrénil, the vice-resident in Dong-Hoi, who was assisted by M. Garnier, an inspector of militia. Following the instructions [21] of the Governor General, that is to say without entering open combat, this force reached Muong-Phin after a rapid march, which it entered on May 14, 1893. On the 26th of the same month it reached the Mékong opposite Kemmarat.

In these parts there was a veritable rout of the Siamese, who

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726 were reduced to circulating rumors of the imminent arrival of sizeable reinforcements which would come and reoccupy the regions out of which we were driving them.

In the meantime another column, commanded by Inspector Groscurin and under the general direction of M. Luce, the resident in Nghê-An, was operating in the region of Cammon.

Greater difficulties confronted us there. The region had been organized (1) by the Siamese commissioner Phrayot. The latter

(1) In accordance with the treaty of March 27, 1889.

joined with the two neighboring commissioners of Nong-Khay and Outhène, and with their help was able to surround M. Groscurin in Keng-Kiêt, which was the last step of the French column before the Mékong. The small force was massacred by the Siamese and its leader, who was stricken with fever and helpless, was killed point-blank without being able to defend himself (June).

After this ambush M. Luce, who could not obtain the reinforcements which he requested and who was also suffering from violent accesses of fever, returned to Saigon and left his command in the hands of Inspector Soler. The latter was valiantly seconded by Chief Guardsman Huguot, and completely routed the Laotians in an engagement at Na-Khai.

Phrayot, whose authority had been greatly shaken by this setback, fell back to the right bank of the Mékong and was unfortunately able to take a large part of the left bank's population with him.

Another series of operations was in course in the north of Cambodia, under the direction of M. Bastard, vice-resident in Cambodia.

In a rapid march a company of Annamite riflemen under the command of Captain Thoreux occupied Stung-Treng (April 1) and then Khône (April 5), which the Siamese commissioner and small garrison abandoned in haste.

[22] M. Bastard then returned to Saigon to give an account of the results of his mission. Captain Thoreux left a detachment on the island of Khône and returned almost alone in the direction of Stung-Treng, where he was to set up a supply service. As he was moving along the right bank of the river he was taken prisoner by a small Siamese force. He was led away to Oubone, where Prince Prit-Chit, who was, as we have seen, quite favorably disposed towards the

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French, did not make his captivity too hard for him.

Reinforcements arrived from Oubone, and in May the Siamese tried to retake Khône. Their plan failed, thanks to two companies brought in by Captain Adam de Villiers. The blockade of the island was lifted and the month of July was spent in capturing the whole group of islands, particularly Dom-Som which had been fortified.

When confronted with these simultaneous actions the Siamese became greatly alarmed. It was to be feared in Bangkok that the populace, which was hostile to our influence and might also be aroused by certain court officials, might extract reprisals from the Europeans who lived in the capital. Under these circumstances, and perhaps also so as to take advantage of an unsettled situation, Britain resolved to reinforce its forces in Bangkok.

It was the assassination of Inspector Groscurin which obliged us, despite our peaceful intentions, to enter into open warfare with Siam. This ambush indeed called for immediate reparations.

Up to that point the chancelleries had not intervened and the operations had taken place, so to speak, without the diplomats' knowledge. The Keng-Kiet incident precipitated the course of events.

M. Le Myre de Vilers, who was returning to Cochinchina, was sent to ask the Court of Bangkok for an explanation, and Admiral Humann, the commander-in-chief of the Far Eastern Squadron, received orders to sail to the Gulf of Siam.

On July 12 the Inconstant and the Comète, preceded by the steamship J.-B. Say of the Cochinchinese River Merchant Fleet which was making its regular voyage, advanced towards the bar of the Ménam. As it was about to cross the pass of Pak-Nam in accordance with the rules [23] [Illustration] [24] [Blank page] [Unpaged map inserted between pp. 24 and 25] [25] of the port of Bangkok (Article 15 of the treaty of August 15, 1856 (1)), the J.-B. Say was

(1) See Appendix IX.

shot at and sunk, for a projectile hit a vital spot. In the face of such cowardly aggression Admiral Humann was forced to respond. The two gunboats crossed the bar and, passing under the fire of the Siamese batteries of Pak-Nam and Phra-Chula, went up the Ménam to Bangkok where they cast anchor that same evening.

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726 "Our seamen," as M. Flourens put it, "had cut their way through the barrages, the torpedos and the obstacles of all kinds which the Siamese Government had laid out in order to shield, behind a barrier which it believed insurmountable, the brazen despicableness of its incessant provocations."

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728 The news aroused indignation as soon as it became known in France, and in its session of July 18 the Chamber authorized the Foreign Minister to deliver the following ultimatum to the Siamese Government:

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1. Recognition of French rights to the left bank of the Mékong and to its islands.
 2. Evacuation of the Siamese outposts established on the left bank of the Mékong, within the space of one month.
 3. Satisfaction for the aggressions committed.
 4. Punishment of the guilty.
 5. An indemnity of two millions for damages caused.
 6. Deposit of the sum of three millions as security, or payment of the tax revenues from the provinces of Battambang and Siem-Reap (2).

(2) See Appendix IXa.

Siam refused at first to accept these conditions, and on July 22 offered to cede the left bank as far as the 18th parallel, thus wishing to keep Vien-Tiane, Luang-Prabang, Tran-Ninh, the Hua-Pahn, Muong-Poukha, Xieng-Khong, Muong-Sing, the two Muong-Hou and the Pahn-Na on the left bank. It was counting, and with some reason, on the support of Great Britain.

Lord Roseberry and Ed. Grey tried, but in vain, to arouse [26] opinion in London and to provoke diplomatic intervention. The Foreign Office refused categorically. Discouraged by this sudden abandonment and intimidated by the resolute attitude of the French Government (1), the king of Siam accepted the conditions which had

(1) In accordance with the Department's instructions, M. Pavie had struck his flag and left Bangkok on July 26 aboard the Inconstant.

been offered without further ado. M. Le Myre de Villers was named Ambassador Extraordinary and arrived to conclude a treaty with the Court of Siam which should be based on the ultimatum. Signed on

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October 3, 1893, in Bangkok, it was ratified by the French parliament in January 1894.

The following are the clauses of the treaty (2):

(2) See Appendix X.

Treaty concluded in Bangkok on October 3, 1893, between the government of the French Republic and the government of His Majesty the king of Siam, in order to bring an end to the disputes which have arisen between the two lands and strengthen friendly relations.

The President of the French Republic and H.M., the king of Siam, wishing to bring an end to the disputes which have arisen in recent times between the two States and to strengthen the friendly relations which have existed between France and Siam for centuries past, have named as their plenipotentiaries:

The President of the French Republic,

M. Charles Marie Le Myre de Vilers, Grand Officer of the Legion of Honor and of the White Elephant, Minister plenipotentiary of the 1st class, deputy;

And H.M., the king of Siam, His Royal Highness Prince Devawongse Varoprakar, knight of the order of Maha Chakrri, grand officer of the Legion of Honor, etc., minister of Foreign Affairs; who, after communicating their full powers to one another and having recognized them as in good and due form, have agreed to the following articles:

ARTICLE 1. The Siamese Government renounces all claim to all of the territories on the left bank of the Mékong and to the islands in this river.

ARTICLE 2. The Siamese Government agrees not to maintain or circulate ships or armed vessels on the waters of the Great Lake [Grand Lac], the Mékong or their tributaries within the limits specified in the following article.

ARTICLE 3. The Siamese Government shall not construct any fortified outpost or military establishment in the provinces of Battambang and Siem-Reap or within a radius of twenty-five kilometers from the right bank of the Mékong.

ARTICLE 4. In the zones specified in Article 3, police duty shall be carried out, according to [27] custom, by the local authorities with only such contingents as are strictly necessary. No regular or

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648 irregular armed force shall be maintained there.

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175 ARTICLE 5. The Siamese Government agrees to open negotiations with the French Government, within a period of six months, with a view to drawing up regulations governing customs and trade in the territories specified in Article 3, and to revising the treaty of 1856.

Until such an agreement has been reached, no customs duties shall be established in the zone specified in Article 3. Reciprocity shall continue to be accorded by the French Government to the products of the aforesaid zone.

ARTICLE 6. Since the development of navigation along the Mékong may necessitate certain construction projects on the right bank, or the establishment of boat relays and depots for wood and coal, the Siamese Government agrees to provide, at the request of the French Government, all necessary facilities for this purpose.

ARTICLE 7. French citizens, subjects and nationals may circulate and engage in trade freely in the territories specified in Article 3, when provided with a pass issued by the French authorities. Reciprocity shall be accorded to the inhabitants of the aforesaid zones.

ARTICLE 8. The French Government reserves the right to establish consulates wherever it deems suitable in the interest of its nationals, and particularly at Korat and Muong-Nan.

ARTICLE 9. In case of any difficulties in interpretation, the French text alone shall be deemed valid.

ARTICLE 10. The present treaty must be ratified within a period of four months dating from the day of its signing.

In faith of which the below-named respective plenipotentiaries have signed the present treaty in duplicate and have affixed their seals thereto.

Done at the palace of Vallabha, in Bangkok, October 3, 1893.

(Signed) Le Myre de Vilers

(Signed) Devawongse Varoprakar

An agreement of which the following is the text was joined to the preceding treaty:

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The plenipotentiaries have determined, in the present agreement, the different measures and steps involved in carrying out the peace treaty signed this day, and the ultimatum accepted on last August 5.

ARTICLE 1. The last Siamese military posts on the left bank [28] of the Mékong shall be evacuated within the maximum space of one month dating from September 5.

ARTICLE 2. All fortifications in the zone specified in Article 3 of the treaty dated this day shall be razed.

ARTICLE 3. The authors of the attempts on Tong-Xieng-Kham and Kammoun shall be judged by the Siamese authorities. A representative of France shall be present at the judgment and shall see to it that the penalties pronounced are carried out.

The French Government reserves the right to judge whether the sentences are sufficient and, if need arise, to demand a new trial before a mixed tribunal whose composition it shall determine.

ARTICLE 4. The Siamese Government shall place at the disposition of the Minister of France in Bangkok or of the French frontier authorities all French, Annamite and Laotian subjects of the left bank and the Cambodians who are being detained on any grounds whatsoever. It shall in no way impede the return to the left bank of former inhabitants of this region.

ARTICLE 5. The Ban-Bien of Tong-Xieng-Kham and his retinue shall be brought to the French Legation by a delegate of the Foreign Minister, as well as the weapons and the French flag seized by the Siamese authorities.

ARTICLE 6. The French Government shall continue to occupy Chantaboun (1) until such time as the provisions of the present Agreement have been carried out, particularly the complete evacuation

(1) We are still there in 1901.

and pacification both of the left bank and the zones specified in Article 3 of the treaty dated this day.

In faith of which the respective plenipotentiaries have signed the present agreement and affixed their seals thereto.

Done in duplicate at the palace of Vallabha, in Bangkok,
October 3, 1893.

(Signed) Le Myre de Vilers,
(Signed) Devawongse Varoprakar.

It became perfectly apparent, after the signing of the treaty and the additional agreement, that these two acts were nothing but palliatives. Only the out-and-out annexation of Siam, in addition to the fact that it would have greatly enlarged our colonial empire, would have enabled us to hold the British and the Germans, who were our commercial rivals, in check.

For a long time the Siamese had been saying, "The day when we are forced to evacuate we shall leave nothing but the land, the water and the wild beasts of the forests." And, as a matter of fact, [29] they had applied this maxim almost to the letter in 1827 and 1840 when, out of fear of Annamite reprisals on the left bank, they had forced people and livestock to follow them over to the right bank and all the way to the Ménam valley. This procedure was altogether too simple for them not to have had the idea of trying it again in 1893. Time was the only thing they lacked to carry out their sinister plan, but they left us only a depopulated and devastated land, keeping for themselves the Laos of the right bank and the rich provinces of Angkor and Battambang, that is to say the well-populated and fertile territories which had never suffered, as the present-day Laos, several invasions in less than a century.

The hesitancy of the court of Bangkok when the ultimatum was delivered, as well as its attempts to keep the territories of the left bank of the Mékong above the 18th parallel, were once more a clear indication of British interference. Although not apparent, British influence had never ceased to make itself felt in the course of all these negotiations. The goal of this hidden influence was to preserve British preponderance in the Pahn-Na and, since Britain was already master of the kingdom of Ava, to facilitate the achievement of its plans for a railway towards S'áémao and Yunnan-Sen.

It was nevertheless forced to come out into the open, and demanded that a neutral zone or sort of buffer state be established between the British and French territories along the Upper Mékong. It aimed at preventing us from occupying territory which had been

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regularly ceded to us by the treaty of October 3, by transforming them into a neutral zone where it might perhaps later find means of establishing itself.

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In order to settle this ticklish question an Anglo-French commission presided over by Messrs. Pavie and Scott was to work on the very spot in order to discover the conditions under which such a buffer state might be established. A backward glance will now be necessary to set the question of the Sib-Song-Pahn-Na in its proper context.

[30] THE QUESTION OF THE SIB-SONG-PAHN-NA

The confederation of the Sib-Song-Pahn-Na (or twelve Pahn-Na) was situated on both banks of the Mekong between 21° and 23° N. latitude and 97° and 100° E. longitude.

Eight of these Pahn-Na were on the left bank (1) and four on the

(1) The eight Pahn-Na on the left bank were Xieng-Hong, Muong-La, Muong-Poung, Muong-Noune, Muong-Yang, Muong-Rang, Muong-Hou and Muong-Heng.

[Illustration here] right bank of the great river (2). The first had

(2) The four Pahn-Na on the right bank were Muong-Lem (or Muong-Lim), Muong-Houng, Muong-Hai and Muong-Meng.

their capital in Xieng-Hong (or Kiang-Oung), and the second in Muong-Lem.

The confederation was a tributary of Burma and of China, but the latter country's suzerainty was nominal rather than real. Tribute in money and in kind was paid only to the king of Ava, and each Pahn-Na also provided him with a thousand armed men in time of war.

[31] This situation did not continue beyond 1875, for at that time Prince Thibau overthrew the reigning dynasty in Burma, put King Mèn-Dou-Mèn to death with all his family, except for one direct heir in the person of Prince Myngoun-Mèn, and then seized the throne. But the usurper was detested by the people because of his cruelty and his vices, and also because he was thought, whether rightly or wrongly, to be supported by the British.

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The mandarins whom he sent into the Pahn-Na to replace [Illustration here] those of the former king could not maintain themselves there, for they were not obeyed and could not collect the various tributes and taxes.

Thus after three years of fruitless attempts they returned to Mandalay and let the Pahn-Na govern themselves as they wished. It was for this reason that the confederation no longer sent Burma the customary head tax, but contented itself with sending a small honorary tribute from time to time.

China, for its part, obtained nothing from the Pahn-Na except a tribute in kind consisting of tea of that region. It also collected certain duties (Li-Kin) on this product when it was exported. Chinese suzerainty, very broad in its form and very meager in its [32] effects, limited its tribute and taxes to these simple bounties. A delegate from the Tao-Tai of Pou-Euri-Fou with the rank of a sergeant and accompanied by four lancers who were in tatters and covered with vermin, was the only Chinese representative in Xieng-Hong in 1890 and 1891.

In 1883-84, while Britain was preparing to seize Upper Burma, King Thibau made overtures to France in the hope of obtaining our support and permission to secure supplies of weapons and ammunition by way of Tonkin and the Pahn-Na.

The Burmese plenipotentiaries thus gave official confirmation to the declaration made in Mandalay in 1884 to M. Deloncle, who was then on a diplomatic mission. The declaration contained the following passage:

"The eight Pahn-Na on the left bank of the Mékong shall become a part of French Tonkin and the river shall serve as frontier between French Tonkin and Burma, from the point where it leaves China to a point below Xieng-Sèn" (1).

(1) See Appendices VIII and XI.

In the meantime Jules Ferry, who had conducted all the negotiations and parleys with Burma, fell from power and Britain, ever aware of difficulties which might hinder our forward march, profited from the circumstance and from our difficulties in Tonkin in order to seize Upper Burma. It did not, however, become interested in the Pahn-Na before 1890 or 1891.

The Pavie mission had already explored the region and had

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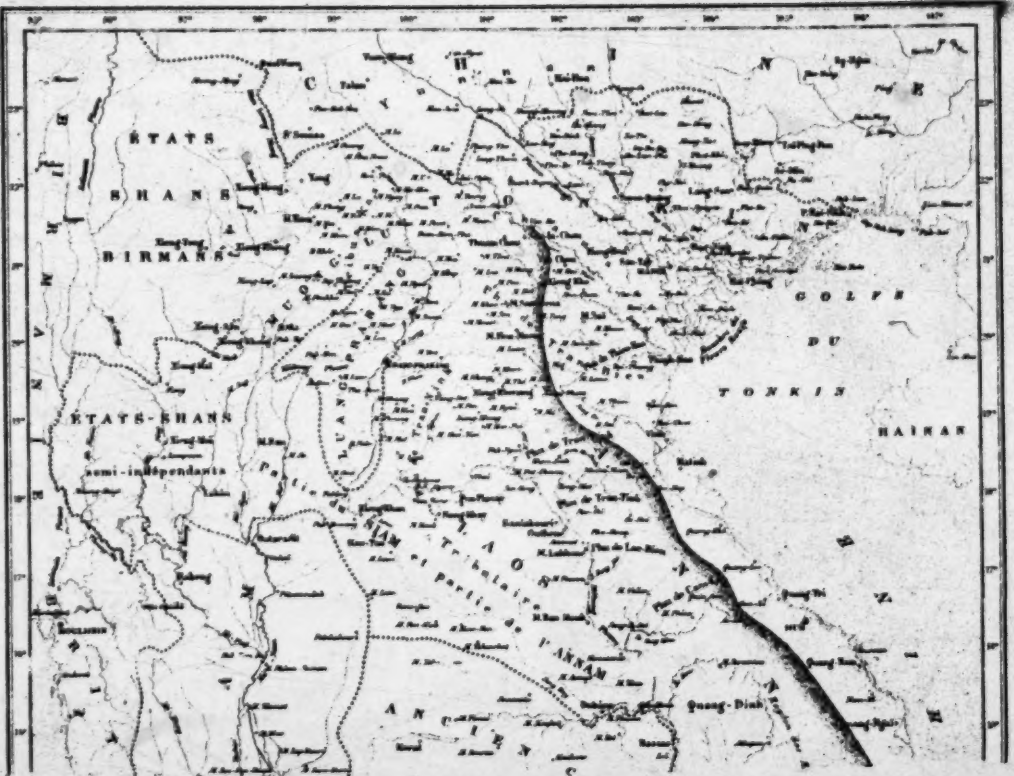
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Political Map of Indo-China in 1893 before the Franco-Siamese Treaty of October 3.

Plate 4 Part A /between pp. 32 and 33/

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Political Map of Indo-China in 1893 before the Franco-Siamese Treaty of October 3.

studied its topography at the beginning of 1891. One of its members had even founded a French trading post at Xieng-Hong, over which the French flag flew, and had been accredited to the local chieftains by Prince Myngoun-Mèn who was the sole heir, in their eyes, to the throne of Ava (2).

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(2) See Appendix XII.

Unfortunately, we made the mistake of not making public this agreement by our agent with the chiefs of the Pahn-Na, who were quite prepared to accept our protection. Britain quietly went to work in the land. British agents were sent there and sowed discord among the chiefs, and finally in [A two-page map, unpagged, is inserted between pp. 32 and 33.] [33] July 1894 these territories were ceded to China by the United Kingdom. A restrictive clause provided, however, that in no case might they be given back, in whole or in part, to any other nation (1).

(1) See Appendix XI.

This generosity was in absolute contradiction to the agreements which had come before. It violated in clear fashion all previous engagements and made nonsense of the Franco-Chinese treaty of 1887 which awarded us the Pahn-Na on the left bank. Moreover, the territories of Muong-Hou-Neua and Muong-Hou-Tai, which were dependencies of Luang-Prabang, had recently been occupied by the Siamese after the retreat of the Hôis.

In 1894 and 1895 the delimitation of the Franco-Chinese frontier restored the two Muong-Hou to us. Britain used this new state of things as a pretext for accusing China of not having respected the non-retrocession clause in the agreement of June 1895 (2). It

(2) See Appendix XIII.

profited by the occasion in order to take back, as compensation, certain territories in the Kachin States of the north (on the left bank of the Salouen River) which it had ceded to China together with the Pahn-Na.

By virtue of the Franco-Siamese treaty of 1893, we took possession in the following year of the territory on the left bank

648 of the Mékong which was situated to the south of the Pahn-Na and
 175 to the west of Nam-Hou.

It was at this time that Britain's plans became clearly apparent. It claimed, as being under its influence--and on this pretext its agents fomented disorders and revolts there--the States of Xieng-Khong, Muong-Sing and Muong-Mugne as dependencies of Xieng-Tong (Kiang-Toung) and of Xieng-Khèng (Kiang-Khèng), situated on both banks of the Mékong.

So as to counterbalance British influence insofar as possible, and also to see that the treaty of 1893 was carried out and to protect our nationals and those under our jurisdiction, the French Government created the commercial agencies of Xieng-Khong and Xieng-Sèn (right bank) in June 1894. At the same time we took possession of Xieng-Khong, Muong-Mugne, Muong-Poukha and Muong-Luong-[34] Nam-Ta on the left bank. All these territories had been ceded us by Siam, as well as that of Muong-Sing.

Our agents, who lived on the very spot, then saw clearly that the part of the territory of Xieng-Khèng which was called Muong-[illustration here] Sing and was situated on the left bank of the Mékong belonged to us beyond any shadow of a doubt. This region of Muong-Sing was then a dependency of Siam, and in July 1894 our agents had been able to stop its ambassadors at Xieng-Khong at the very time when they were taking the annual tribute to the king of Nan, who was then to send it on to the court of Bangkok. The tribute was forwarded by them, with the message that we were acting out of pure courtesy, so as to emphasize [35] Muong-Sing's old political dependency on Siam and consequently on France, ever since 1893.

In the meantime an event occurred which cast a new light on the question and completely changed all diplomatic plans.

In contravention of the arrangements made at Bangkok by the heads of the British and French international Commissions and by the representatives of the two nations in Paris, pressing orders were sent directing the troops of Upper Burma to occupy the territory on the left bank which had recently been abandoned by Siam. [Illustration alongside text here.]

The British Commission, moreover, instead of going to Xieng-Khong on the right bank as had been agreed and waiting for the French Commission there, avoided going by this route. It went to

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Xieng-Tong well before the appointed date and there it found Lieutenant Stirling, the commander of the troops from Upper Burma. Losing no time, the British mission at once ordered the Tiao-Fa of Muong-Sing to prepare lodgings and provisions for three thousand soldiers, to put the roads in good condition and to go to Xieng-Tong with all his mandarins and make his submission to H.M. the queen of England.

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Upon the complaint of the Tiao-Fa of Muong-Sing and at the sight of the letters from the king of Siam saying that Muong-Sing had belonged [36] to France since 1893, M. Macey, our agent in Xieng-Khong who was responsible for organizing the new territory on the left bank, took an initiative which was bold but decreed by the gravity of the situation.

Both to safeguard our rights and to make the members of the British mission feel all the tactlessness of their proceedings, our agent gave orders to the authorities of Muong-Sing which saved the situation. He confirmed all the local functionaries in their privileges and prerogatives and gave them French flags to be distributed in their muongs and villages (1).

(1) See Appendix XIV.

When the British Commission failed to see the Tiao-Fa of Muong-Sing come to Xieng-Tong and make his submission, it decided on November 24, 1894, to cross over to the left bank by way of Xieng-Lap with a force composed of two companies of "Gurka rifles" and a troop of Indian cavalry (Sikhs). But when confronted with the fact that our agent had already taken possession, and when it saw, as it reached the left bank, that the French flag was already flying, the British Commission sent the greater part of its troops back to the right bank and waited at Muong-Sing for the French Commission, which arrived a week later from Muong-Hou.

In spite of the accomplished fact the heads of the International Commissions resumed their discussion, and by common accord they decided to evacuate the disputed territory and to refer the matter to their Governments.

After the departure of M. Pavie, our commissioner general in Laos and head of the French Commission, Sir Friars, who was commissioner general of Upper Burma, came to settle in Xieng-Tong. During this time Lieutenant Stirling had returned to occupy

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Muong-Sing (April 1895).

The effect of this broken promise was to return the question of the limits of our possessions to the agenda. After numerous protests on our part talks were begun in Europe, subsequent to which the two Governments finally elaborated the following declaration:

[37] 1. The Governments of France and Great Britain agree not to send, in any case or under any pretext without one another's consent, their armed forces into the region including the basins of the Petchaboury, Mékong, Ménam and Bang-Pakong (River of Pétrion) rivers and their respective tributaries, as well as the coastal region which stretches from Muong-Bang-Tapan to Muong-Pasé, and thus including all the territory situated to the north of the Ménam basin between the Anglo-Siamese frontier, the Mékong River and the eastern limit of the Mé-Ing basin. They further agree not to acquire any privilege or private advantage in this region the benefit of which shall not be common to France and to Great Britain and to their nationals and persons under their jurisdiction, or which shall not be available to them on a footing of equality.

These provisions, however, shall not be interpreted as affecting the special clauses which, by virtue of the treaty concluded on October 3, 1893, between France and Siam, apply to a 25-kilometer zone on the right bank of the Mékong and to navigation on this river.

2. Nothing in the preceding clause shall prevent any action on which the two powers shall agree and which they shall deem necessary to maintain the independence of the kingdom of Siam. But they agree not to enter into any separate arrangement which would enable a third power to do what they reciprocally agree not to do in the present declaration.

3. Leaving the mouth of the Nam-Huok and going northwards to the Chinese frontier, the thalweg of the Mékong shall form the limit between the possessions or spheres of influence of France and Great Britain. It is agreed that nationals of both countries and persons under their jurisdiction shall not exercise any jurisdiction or authority whatsoever in the possessions or spheres of influence of the other country. In the part of the river here in question, police powers over the islands which are separated from the British bank by a branch of the aforesaid river shall belong to the French authorities as long as such separation exists.

The exercise of fishing rights shall be common to inhabitants of both banks.

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4. The two Governments agree that commercial or other privileges and advantages conceded in the two Chinese provinces of Yunnan and Set-Chuen either to France or to Great Britain by virtue of their respective treaties with China of March 1, 1894, and June 20, 1895, and all privileges and advantages of any nature which may thereafter be conceded in the same Chinese provinces either to France or to Great Britain, shall, insofar as it depends on them, be extended and acknowledged to be common to both powers, their nationals and persons under their jurisdiction, and they agree to use their influence and good offices with the Chinese Government to this end.

5. This article relates to the Niger.

6. This article deals with negotiations to be undertaken in order to replace the present [38] general agreement with a new agreement responding to the intentions announced in the above articles.

Done at London on January 15, 1896.

(Signed) A. de Courcel.

(Signed) Salisbury

As a result of this declaration the territory of Muong-Sing was returned to us in March 1896, and from that time on French Laos was constituted as shall be described in the following chapters (1).

(1) It will be of the utmost interest, after this rapid résumé of the situation, to read Appendices XV and XVI which show in detail what our action was in the Mékong basin, and to compare what we intended to accomplish there with what the necessities of international policy enabled us to do.

[39] [Illustration here]

CHAPTER II

§ I--GEOGRAPHICAL POSITION--BOUNDARIES--EXTENT

Laos extends between 22° 30' N. latitude, somewhat below Muong-Kang (prefecture of S'émào), and 13° 15' N. latitude, the latter being the parallel of Thboung-Kla, opposite Siem-Boc. Slightly to the east of this point, however, on the 105th meridian, the Laotian province of Darlac stretches a long point southwards to the 12th parallel.

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311 and a few plateaus of small extent which are the only spots suited to farming and, in consequence, suited to settlements by human groups.

The uneven disposition of the country is the first cause of the low population density. It is not the only one.

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•175 For more than a century the Hôis and the Siamese have taken turns in sacking the country, especially the northern part. Their methods differed, but the final result was the same. The former massacred the inhabitants after burning the villages, and forced those who had escaped famine and torture to go and settle in another region. The Siamese proceeded in a more methodical fashion, and depopulated the [125] land by making the inhabitants, livestock and elephants cross over to the right bank of the Mékong and oftentimes then taking them as far as the valley of the Ménam.

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648 Fortunately this state of affairs, which prevailed when we took possession of Laos, is far from being immutable and there is every hope that the causes which gave birth to this forced departure will never again occur. The French occupation has safeguarded the population against the return of the old invasions, and in the same way the equity and justice of our administration make it possible for the natives to count on interior tranquillity and on the products of their labor.

Great efforts have also been made by our consuls in Siam and our administrators in Laos towards repopulating the country, and appreciable results have already been achieved in this direction. Thus by virtue of the agreement appended to the Franco-Siamese treaty of October 3, 1893, two thousand families including a minimum of eight thousand individuals of both sexes and a great deal of livestock who had previously been taken to Siam were able to return and settle on the left bank of the Mékong, the land of their origin.

168 Nothing, moreover, would stand in the way of an appeal to the other parts of Indo-China to repopulate Laos. The deltas, for example, are overflowing with people and their industrious population is so dense that the part of the land which is cultivable is by far too limited for each individual.

By offering these people a few advantages, especially in the beginning, it would be easy to attract them to Laos. By dint of hard work they would doubtless find existence comparatively easy there instead of being reduced, as they are today in certain regions, to a difficult struggle for survival.

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In résumé, the study of the Thai language and its derivatives is an attractive one. The language is gentle, musical and euphonic, and is easy for us as well as for the other Latin peoples to pronounce.

It is considered to have many analogies with Malay and most of the Polynesian idioms.

Siamese, Youn and Lu have become localized in certain parts of Laos or have been set aside for special uses. Thus Youn, as we have seen, is the sacred language of Laos.

Lao, however, or the Laotian form of the Thai language, is quite widespread.

[148] In fact, outside of Laos this language is still spoken in Yunnan, in Tonkin, in the two Kouangs and, it would seem, as far away as Hainan,

4. RELIGIONS

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In prehistoric times Laos must have been in the same situation as the other parts of the world, from the moral and religious point of view. [Illustration here.]

In the age of polished stone, as in the bronze age, there were probably great similarities between the Orient and the Occident with respect to tools and weapons, and also with respect to speculative, religious and philosophical ideas.

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This state of affairs continued for many centuries until the time when, with the first peaceful migrations from the north and northwest, Vedic precepts and a knowledge of the laws of Manou--laws which were moral, social and above all physiological--began to infiltrate the region. Later on, between 900 and 700 B.C., more militant invaders brought in the already age-old dogmas of Brahminism, together with ancestor worship and many superstitions.

Finally, after another period of fifteen to thirteen centuries, Buddhism made its appearance in Indo-China by two different routes, the south and the northwest.

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These various doctrines were transformed as time passed and underwent additions, diminutions and numerous changes both in form and content. Struggles, invasions and migrations and civil wars profoundly modified races and made their impression on minds, always leaving ineradicable traces on body and spirit.

It is because of these constant upheavals that we note in Laos today a great host of dogmas and practices which range all the way

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[525] is the long pirogue, and the jockeys are the oarsmen. Nor will it be
422 in vain to remark that, as in our races, heavy wagers are often laid
by the owners and the lovers of this kind of sport.

619 Thais or Phou-Thais. The Thais or Phou-Thais are divided into
four distinct groups. These are:

- 144
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1. The Khao-Thais (white);
 2. The Dam-Thais (black);
 3. The Deng-Thais (red);
 4. The Neua-Thais (northern).

The Khao-Thais are the result of marriages between Chinese men and Dam-Thai women, or vice versa, although the former case is the most frequent. They do not form large agglomerations, but only isolated family groups in the midst of the surrounding population. They are found only in the northern part of the Sib-Song-Chau-Thais, a territory which is dependent on Laos from the ethnographic point of view but administratively attached to Tonkin.

The following is what is known of their origin: [229] [Illustration] [230] [Blank page] [231]

"Around 1600 a rebel Chinese leader assembled a few partisans, set sail from Canton and landed at Haiphong. From there he went on to Bac-Ninh, continually increasing the number of his men. At Bac-Ninh the rebel leader received an envoy from the king of Annam, who asked him to help put down the Thais and the Muongs of the Black River. The Chinese leader accepted, and after leaving Bac-Ninh he went to Lao-Kay, from which point he soon entered the province of the Sib-Sing-Chau-Thais. After defeating the Thais and the Muongs he was given this province out of gratitude for his help. His troops, worn out by the campaign, settled in the country and lost no time in marrying Thai women. It was from such unions that the white Thais were born" (1).

(1) E. Picanon, op. cit. [Le Laos français, Paris, 1901.]

619
563 Dam-Thais and Deng-Thais. These two varieties have a common origin and belong to the same family (2). The different names which

(2) Thais are found in nearly all of Laos, where they are scattered among the Laotian population. They are particularly numerous in the Hua-Pahn, where they are in the majority in certain muongs.

Laotians AM8
Tribal Tai

Men's and women's clothing varies little in [244] form from that of the Thais. Under their jacket, however, the women wear a breast-cloth attached to the neck and waist by cords, like the Annamite and Tonkinese women. 291

The Lus. Two centuries or so ago the Lus, who also belong to the Thai race, used to live in the "Shan states" between the Salouen and the Nam-Hon, where they were surrounded by a drifting population composed of Burmese, Kunes, Ngieous, etc. [Illustration alongside text here.] 619 175 •

Following emigrations, they came to Laos and formed two distinct agglomerations.

Some Lu families have settled in the course of this century on the territory of Luang-Prabang. Today these Lus form villages composed exclusively of people of their race, but live on good terms with the Laotians, whose language and customs they have adopted. [563]

In the old Lu kingdom of Muong-Sing, on the other hand, this people has retained its habits, that is to say its character and temperament are like those of the Burmese. 101

There the Lu is boastful, full of arrogance, a braggart and insolent, but a little firmness is enough to humble his pride. [105]

Lus have a clear complexion, delicate features, keen eyes and a swinging stride. The men are generally tattooed from the calf of the leg to above the navel, and they also have tattoos on their chest. [245] neck, shoulders and arms which are generally red and in the shape of squares with rounded corners. They have long hair rolled in a coil on top or slightly to one side of the head. This coil is wrapped in an enormous turban which they wear tilted over one ear. Many of them have a moustache. This they train upwards, a trait which gives them a conquering air, and to keep it up they smear it with wax. [Illustration alongside text here] 142 304 302

The men's costume consists of a pair of full trousers and a short jacket buttoned along the side. It is made of cotton and is dark blue, almost black, in color. The bottoms of the trousers, the edges of the jacket, the cuffs of the sleeves and the armholes are ornamented with three galloons (blue, white and red) which are quite narrow. Their holiday clothes are often made of silk in varied colors. 291

The women wind their hair into a heavy coil on top of the head and on the side of the coil they place a broad circular plaque of chased silver. They wear skirts like the Laotian women, but the stripes are very broad, run crosswise and are in bright colors. They [302] [301]

Finally, the Ao-Tchaine Yaos owe their name (bearing sapeks) to the fact that the men's jacket, which is shorter than that of the other Yaos, is ornamented in front with several rows of flat copper or silver buttons which resemble sapeks (Annamite and Chinese coins).

The women fasten a pad of compact, gummed hair on their coil by means of sticks made of ivory, of bone or simply of wood.

Like the Meos, the Yaos inhabit the peaks of mountains in northern Laos where they grow poppies. They are confirmed opium smokers.

[270] [Blank page] [271] [Illustration at top]

CHAPTER V

1. ORGANIZATION

Consulate and Commercial Agencies. Before the treaty of October 3, 1893, we already had a consul at Luang-Prabang in the Mekong basin, on the right bank of the river. In 1892 the vice-consulate was closed and commercial agencies were set up at Luang-Prabang, Outhene and Bassac on the right bank, and then at Stung-Treng on the left bank. The first three agencies were directed by representatives of the French Syndicate of Laos, and the last by a clerk of Posts and Telegraphs. The commercial agents performed the functions of consular agents. Later on in 1894 and 1895 when we actually took possession of Laos, that is to say of the territory on the left bank of the Mekong, two additional agencies were established at Xieng-Khong and Xieng-Sen. Then in 1895 the agencies of Pak-Lay, Xieng-Khan, Nong-Khay, Lakhone, Ban-Mouk-Dahan and Kemmarat were created on the right bank, bringing the total number to ten, for those of Stung-Treng and Luang-Prabang had been raised to the status of commissionerships.

These new agencies were directed by "commercial agents" specially appointed for the purpose. In addition to the delegates of the French Syndicate of Laos who continued to hold office, these agents included a few inspectors of the Tonkin native guard.

The duties of these officials were poorly defined, and their chief role was to assert our presence. They were mere information agents. For this reason official circles soon decided to abolish these posts, an action made possible chiefly by the establishment of two new vice-consulates in Siam, one at Oubone and one at Ban-Dua-Makeng.

648 "However, since it did not appear advisable to sanction the abandon-
439 ment of the commercial agencies by an official act, which might
175 have been regarded by the Laotian people and by the Court of Bangkok
as a modification of the policy followed in the Mekong valley by the
French Government," the positions were not discontinued, but only
the officials who had held them.

It is thus that today the ten commercial agencies are directed by
the administrators of neighboring provinces or by chief clerks or chief
guards who perform the functions of commercial agents.

631 Temporary organization. Government com-
175 missionerships. Missions. As soon as the terms of the
Franco-Siamese treaty of October 3, 1893, became known, various
missions originating in Annam and Cochinchina were sent to Laos to
reconnoiter, and set up a temporary organization for, the territories
on the left bank of the Mekong to which Siam had abandoned its
claims.

In Upper Laos our agents, who were already established on the
right bank at Luang-Prabang, took possession of the territory bearing
this name. Then in the course of the first half of 1894, when the
government commissioner M. Pavle had arrived, they settled in the
former Annamite plus of Tran-Bienh and Tran-Ninh and in the terri-
tory of [Map, unpagged, inserted here] [273] Vien-Tiane. Somewhat
later the assistant commissioner of the French Republic in Laos (1) and

(1) The general commissioner of the French Republic in Laos,
M. Pavle, was the chief of two frontier delimitation missions
which operated in the basin of the Red River, the Black River
and the Mekong. His assistant commissioner was M. Lefevre-
Pontalis.

one of our former commercial agents in Luang-Prabang went out to
reconnoiter and organize the territories of Xieng-Khong (left bank),
Poukha and Muong-Sing (2).

(2) A newly appointed government commissioner went out to
take possession of the territory of the two Muong-Hou and settled
at Muong-Ha-Hine to await the impending delimitation of the
territory.

In middle Laos, two administrative agents delegated by the

Superior Resident in Annam established our authority in the former Annamite plus of Tran-Dinh, Tran-Tinh, Lac-Bien, Cam-Lo and Quang-Dinh. They founded the centers of Faureville (now Pak-Hin-Boun) and Song-Khone (3).

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(3) The capital of the province of Song-Khone was soon after transferred to Savannakhet.

In the south Commander Tournier, who had already been placed in command of the troops stationed at Khong, Stung-Treng, Attoupeu and Ban-Mouang, was at the same time entrusted with civil authority in these territories.

At the beginning of the second half of 1894 three administrators set out from Cochinchina to succeed Commander Tournier, who had been appointed to a mission for delimiting the Sino-Annamite frontiers, and to organize the provinces of Khong, Ban-Mouang, Attoupeu and Stung-Treng at the expense of the Cochinchinese budget.

Permanent organization. The Superior Resident on service and the Superior Commandants. In 1895 M. Bouloche, Superior Resident on service in Laos, was made responsible for organizing our new possession on a permanent basis.

Laos was divided into two parts, named Upper Laos and Lower Laos, each of which was autonomous. The former included all the territories between Yunnan, the Anglo-Shan States, Tonkin and Annam as far as the [274] northern limits of Cammon. The capital of Upper Laos was Luang-Prabang.

Lower Laos included all the territories situated between the Mekong and the Annamitic Chain, from the northern limits of Cammon to Cambodia. Its capital was Khong.

A high official with the title of Superior Commandant was placed at the head of each of these divisions. He was directly responsible to the Governor General and had the duties and privileges of Superior Residents in the other parts of Indo-China.

Each of these divisions of Laos was organized into a certain number of commissionerships, respecting in most cases the old administrative subdivisions or those which had been newly created by the Siamese. The Sib-Song-Chau-Thais, however, which had previously been dependencies of Luang-Prabang, were joined administratively to Tonkin, and in 1898 part of the territory of the Hua-Pahn-Ha-Tang-Hoc was attached to the province of Tanh-Hoa (Annam).

631 Upper Laos contained six commissionerships and Lower Laos seven.
175 Each was directed by an official with the title of Government Commissioner [Commissaire] (similar to the title of "commissioner" in British possessions). He was assisted by a clerk, scholars and a native interpreter.

Because of their many and varied duties, government commissioners must have extensive knowledge. In fact, these officials are responsible for general administration, police, collecting taxes and duties, selling opium, public works, justice, public education and, in centers without doctors, for the health service.

A further factor to complicate their task is that the circumscriptions are large and communications difficult.

847 Just as in physiology "the function creates the organ," so must our agents become topographers, naturalists, geologists, engineers, architects, etc. all at the same time. Each of them devotes his talents to the task, striving to do his best and able to count only on himself. [275] [Illustration] [276] [Blank page] [277] Their task is facilitated, however, by the zeal and specialized knowledge of the clerks and leaders of the native guard, who are inspectors and chief guards, former officers or sub-officers of the army. Most of these agents have been on campaigns in Algeria or in the colonies and are used to shifting for themselves, to use an expression which is as apt as it is picturesque.

To this system of individual initiative Laos owes the fact of possessing comfortable, durable and healthy installations built of wood, brick or cobwork which certain other colonies, although better endowed from the point of view of the availability of many technical services, did not possess to so high a degree after they had been established for ten years.

631 Present organization. By decree of the Governor
642 General dated February 6, 1899, the two divisions of Laos were joined and a united Laos was placed under the authority of a Superior Resident (1) named by decree of the President of the Republic. This same edict

(1) The enlightened choice of the Government fell on Lieutenant-colonel Tournier, former Superior Commandant in Lower Laos.

abolished the positions of Superior Commandants in Upper and Lower Laos.

Like Cochinchina, Laos is a direct dominion, but is administered according to the forms of a strict protectorate and therefore does not

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289 The amount of paper produced is hardly significant, and is limited to local needs.

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311 TEA. Tea is the most important crop of the Sib-Song-Pahn-Na and the Burmo-Shan States on both banks of the Mekong. The regions of production are included between $21^{\circ} 30'$ and $22^{\circ} 30'$ N. latitude and between $97^{\circ} 30'$ and $99^{\circ} 40'$ E. longitude.

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648 The greater part of these regions, that is to say those situated on the left bank of the Mekong, belonged to us by the terms of the 1887 Franco-Chinese treaty of Tien-Tsin. But because of our slowness to occupy these territories England inherited the rights of Upper Burma and ceded them to China, and finally only the two Muong-Hou remained in our possession.

563 Unfortunately, the small tea-growing region left to us is not only the least productive, but also the one in which tea-growing has degenerated and is no longer practiced except by the Khas.

[377] Yet the climate of the Muong-Hou is similar to that of Man-La, which is located thirty kilometers to the west and whose tea has the same reputation as those of I-Hou, I-Bang, Muong-Hing, Muong-Pang and Muong-Yan, all of which are known as "S'semao and Pou-Eurl Teas." Furthermore, the altitude and configuration of the soil, the nature of the terrain and the varieties of tea plants are all similar in our territory of Muong-Hou and in that of Man-La. But as a consequence of various circumstances and especially of a long interruption in cultivation between 1884 and 1893, most of the tea plants have not been pruned. They have reached a height of more than six meters and the tea which they produce is almost valueless (1).

(1) See Appendix XXVI.

The average production of the whole tea-growing region has been estimated at from 600 to 660 tons. This tea is exported to China, to Burma, to Laos, to Tonkin and to Siam. In 1891 and 1892 France imported a trial shipment of 6,000 kilograms, but the transaction was not repeated because of a rise in transport costs and customs duties which did not leave a large enough profit for the importer.

435 The regions of production prices vary, depending on quality, between 75 and 150 francs per hundred kilograms.

The teas which come from this region meet with little approval in Europe, because they lack the various aromas which the Chinese

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of the highest merit entitled *Petit traité d'Agriculture tropicale*, by H. A. Alford Nicholls, translated from the English by E. Raoul (Paris, 1895, Challamel). This work, which is as complete as it is practical, cannot be too highly recommended.

IV

LIVESTOCK BREEDING

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Without speaking of the poultry which goes to feed the population, the Laotians engage in breeding elephants, horses, buffalo, oxen, pigs, goats and silkworms.

● Elephants. Elephant breeding is profitable, even [397] though this animal does not acquire any commercial value until about its fifth year. It is true that young elephants do not necessitate any special care or any expense, since they always go with their mother and provide for their own food.

In one part of the kingdom of Luang-Prabang, in a province on the right bank of the Mekong which numbers scarcely 13,000 inhabitants (Outhai-Tani), there were a hundred some domesticated elephants in 1898, plus twelve young ones which were the result of breeding. If the example of this province were followed throughout all Laos the number of elephants would rapidly increase, and within a relatively short time would constitute a new source of wealth for the country, one part alone of which was said to possess a million of these animals before the Siamese incursions (1).

(1) The kingdom of Luang-Prabang used to be called "Lan-Xang," The Land of the million elephants.

But with each invasion which Laos underwent, especially during the nineteenth century, the Siamese, the Annamites and the Cambodians did not fail to take turns despoiling it of this veritable wealth in order to increase their own.

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In southern Laos, breeding consists mainly in the training of young animals which have been recently captured. Thus in the province of Ban-Mouang the vast plains of the Se-Kampho and the Septen provide excellent pasturages for elephants. Indeed, there are always fifty or so newly captured animals in the vicinity of Ban-Pa-Pho, which are being trained for sale. It is to be regretted that these beautiful plains are not used for raising livestock in general and

Cochinchina, and this is quite a lucrative trade.

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The following are the main points in Laos where the raising of oxen would have a good chance of success, in view of the nature of the soil and the forage plants which grow there:

1. Northern Laos. Valleys of the upper Nam-Tha; plain of Muong-Sing; plains of the Mekong and of the Nam-Hou in the province of Luang-Prabang; valleys of the Nam-Het and of the upper Song-Ca; plains of Tran-Ninh (2); plains between the Mekong, the Nam-Tone

[175]
[127]

(2) Tran-Ninh used to be the greatest livestock region in Laos as recently as thirty some years ago, and all the buffalo and oxen needed in nearby regions came from there. The occupation of the region by the Hos and its pitiless depopulation by the Siamese completely halted this form of industry. It is beginning to be reborn with the peace and order which we have brought to this region, and the herds are reforming. Exports have already begun again in the last year.

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Livestock is the principal form of wealth of the region, and could yield high profits to a European company which had sufficient capital at its disposition to engage in large-scale breeding. (Bulletin économique de l'Indo-Chine, December 1900. Report of the Superior Resident on Tran-Ninh.)

and the Nam-Ngum, in the province of Vien-Tiane.

[405] 2. Southern Laos. Plain of Tha-Khek and basin of Mahasay, in the province of Cammon; plains of the Mekong, valleys of the Se-Bang-Hien and of its tributaries in the province of Song-Khone; plains between the Se-Set and the Sedone, valley of the Se-Katam, slope of Pou-Pai-Mai, in the province of Saravane; valleys of the Bla (1), of the Poko and of the Ayoun, in the province of

[113]

(1) The raising of oxen might be greatly increased here. In all the villages, especially the Catholic villages, I saw superb herds containing animals with every fine point. If breeding is not more extensive here, this is because the prices offered at Ang-Ke are not greatly higher than those at which the animals are sold in the region, since the Khas use large numbers of them to supplant buffaloes in their superstitious ceremonies. (Bulletin économique de l'Indo-Chine, December 1899. Notes by the Superior Commandant of Lower Laos on the eastern region of Lower Laos.)

439 almost all Chinese, the masters of the markets--who scour the country
441 and leave behind none or almost none of the profits which they ex-
443 tract from it.

Might not the administration establish, for example, periodic
fairs under its supervision which would be held in certain suitably
chosen spots? Under its direction market prices would be posted and
placed within everyone's ken, and the daily market price could be
found of import and export commodities on the nearest large markets
and even on coastal markets. Producers would thus gain correct in-
formation on the value of their merchandise and would be in a position
to decide whether it was to their advantage to operate locally or to
go further on before making their transactions.

The question would still remain of giving strong encouragement
to private initiative with a view toward the establishment of repositories
or emporiums equipped to handle the natural products of the country
in wholesale or retail quantities. Such [426] trading posts or factories
could compete with the present-day traveling merchants by offering
higher prices and also supplying imported goods on more favorable terms.

175 The French Syndicate of Laos [Syndicat français du Laos] made a be-
441 ginning in this direction as early as 1890 and 1891 by establishing its
factories at Luang-Prabang, Nong-Khay and Xieng-Hong and later on,
in 1892, at Bassac and Outhene, thus distributing factories spaced
along the great river over an extent of nearly 2000 kilometers. The
guiding idea of the promoters and stockholders of the Syndicate was
that its agents should above all else be precursors and pioneers of a
fertile idea, just as its counters should be landmarks for future and
lasting establishments to be created after their example and beyond
their initiative. Once this task had been accomplished, however, the
pioneers dispersed and the landmarks so successfully placed were not
utilized.

439 Yet isolated attempts made in recent years by several of our
441 countrymen have not always, it must be confessed, been crowned with
443 success. Without special commercial aptitudes, without either the
necessary capital or credit and consequently not able to supply them-
selves at first hand, and restricted by the system of customs now in
force in Indo-China, they have not succeeded in all their operations
despite their real efforts and their unquestioned good will. Neither
should we lose sight of the fact that commerce in Laos should not seek
its chief profit in the sale of imported products, but rather in the ex-
portation of a few selected natural products such as sticklac, benzoin,
cardamom and rubber, among others.

491 In a land where the population is so sparse and where the centers are often at great distances from one another, the roads have been laid out in accordance with two principal concerns: the shortest distance and the avoidance of as much maintenance work as possible. Thus in order to fulfill these two conditions they pass through swamps on the plains and in mountainous regions over the crests, the gentlest slopes and the least steep hillsides.

In principle, these roads are supposed to be repaired every year, refilled, laid out again if necessary, rid of the trees which have fallen across them and, in a word, kept up in an easily passable state. The administration makes every effort to reach this goal, and is gradually trying to modify the routes and make the bridges which are thrown over the ravines and watercourses more solid and permanent. But time is needed to change the age-old habits of the people and to make them follow a master plan of methodically conceived and executed projects.

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175 In the extreme north in the territory of Muong-Hou-Neua, there are mountain mule tracks which continue on into Yunnan. They were once paved by the Chinese using paving stones taken from the surrounding rocks, and then formed very broad, low steps through the mountains. Traces can still be seen of these roads which have today fallen into disrepair, and there remain, particularly at crossings over watercourses, straight or slanting stone bridges which have fallen into ruins. At certain points there are also stone drinking troughs which sometimes bear the remains of sculptures.

487 In sum, there are scarcely any roads except paths in Laos, and the latter are sufficient for communication by land. Moreover, wide roads have been experimented with in various provinces [471] over sections of varying length. On these wide roads, often even paved, which were built with high crowns and provided with gutters along the sides, it was found that the natives and their animals stubbornly continued to trace a tiny, whimsically twisting path outside of which the grass kept on growing until it covered the road once more.

Here, for each province, is a list of the main roads with some indication of the category to which they belong. We shall not deal, to be sure, with the many paths which are frequented only by travelers on foot and are designed to place one village in communication with another.

[511]

[Illustration at top of page]

CHAPTER XII

1. PRESENT SITUATION OF LAOS COMPARED TO ITS SITUATION IN THE PAST

175 Upon our arrival the peoples of Laos were disillusioned and discouraged. They seemed incapable of taking any initiative whatsoever in order to awaken from their long torpor and to regain, together with their independence, their former state of prosperity.

For the last century especially, this unfortunate Laos has been the prey of rapacious neighbors who have despoiled it. It is not surprising that, following on these events, the inhabitants should have retained a sorrowful memory of the past, that they should be unsure of the present and that they should dread the future. It is thus that they have been led, by a kind of fatalism, to produce nothing beyond what is absolutely indispensable.

[512] Yet this has not always been the case. To judge by the ruins of many pagodas, monuments and ramparts which, in their dilapidation, have retained a mark of melancholy grandeur, it may be said that an era of prosperity reigned in the land up until a comparatively recent past. The jewels, the weapons, the gold and silver objects, the bronze statues, the rich cloth goods, etc. which have escaped the invaders, are not these the proof of an antique splendor?

If we are to place any reliance in various historians, moreover, the Laotian kingdoms of Lan-Xang (Luang-Prabang) and Tchandapouri (Vien-Tiane) were sufficiently renowned abroad in the seventeenth century for the governor of the Dutch East Indies to send the king of Vien-Tiane an embassy led by a Dutch general, Gérard Van Wusthof, whose mission was to engage in relations of friendship and trade with this sovereign.

Today the leaders and notables, no more than the bonzes, would not be able to obtain the expenditures and efforts from the natives which would be necessitated by the construction of these monuments and pagodas or the casting of those religious statues which we see falling into ruins.

oo We must, however, guard against thinking that the present situation of Laos is immutable in its mediocrity. Such a judgment would be excessively hasty, and would not take sufficient account of the active elements which still exist in the land. It would be as excessive as it would be unjust to assume that the inhabitants in general

China and Indo-China (1).

[113] (1) E. Picanon, Le Laos français. 1901, Challamel. [Paris]

II

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144 Laos, Thais and Khas. Although the Laotian legends attribute the same origin to all of these (Mucng-Theng or Dien-Bien-Phu) and say that they all came from the same "gourd" (Nam-Tao-Phoum), it is hardly likely that the Laotians and the Khas have a common origin. Indeed, the characteristics which serve to distinguish the two races are too numerous and too marked, both from the point of view of the racial types themselves and as regards language, mores and religious beliefs.

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174 Nor can it be affirmed that the Khas are the representatives of the aboriginal population, for before any of their people had mounted the throne of Luang-Prabang, six kings foreign to their race had already occupied it--if we may regard the list of the first kings of the land which is preserved in the Phong-Sa Va-Dan (annals of the kingdom) as correct--and of these conquering princes the first is said to have come from India, and the second from Cambodia.

[609] In any case, the Khas are said to have preceded the Laotians in the land, and it was not until the reign of their fourth and last king that they are supposed to have been conquered and driven out or enslaved by the Laotians, who had come down from Dien-Bien-Phu. Since that time, and despite many revolts of which the last is almost recent, the Khas have never ceased being "a folk talliable and liable to forced labor at pleasure" for their vanquishers, and their name has become a synonym for a low person or slave in the current idiom. Not until 1895 were the Khas once and for all freed--freed [56] is perhaps not the word, for in the strict sense they were never slaves--or at least summoned to enjoy a system of rule similar to that of the other natives and which left no margin for arbitrariness and vexations.

173 In designating Dien-Bien-Phu as the cradle of the Laotian people, or at least in attributing to the Laotians and the Thais a common origin, legend seems to be in agreement with reality. There are indeed many points of resemblance and contact between the two peoples. The type is invariably the same, although finer in the native of Luang-Prabang than in the native of Lai-Chau or Dien-Bien-Phu. Not more than two hundred years ago the Laotians still wore, like the black Thais, the Annamite costume and their hair wound in a coil. It [175] [291] [177] was doubtless after contact with the Siamese--who had themselves

• 175 [104] taken after the Cambodians in this respect--that they later
291 adopted the "sampot" and formed the habit of cutting their hair very
177 short, just as the Thais of Lai-Chau today dress like their Chinese
neighbors and wear their hair in a long pigtail. The same reasons
may also explain modifications in language and writing, which must
have been identical in the beginning.

563 Of the Phou-Thais who are settled today in the territory of
144 Luang-Prabang, some--and these make up the greater number--are
black Thais (aborigines) from Dien-Bien-Phu, with a darker coloration
than the inhabitants of Lai-Chau, who are called white Thais for this
reason. The others belong to this second variety.

The ones who sacked Luang-Prabang in 1887 under the leadership
of Deo-Van-Tri were white Thais.

[304] Youngs. The Laotians living on the right bank of the Mekong
at Xieng-Mai, Xieng-Sen, Muong-Nan, etc. are called Youngs.
The only feature which distinguishes them from their fellows on the
left bank is that they generally tattoo their stomachs, whereas the
others tattoo the thighs and upper part of the legs, whence the
names "Lao-Phoung-Khao" (white-bellied Laotians) and Lao-Phoung-
Dam (black-bellied Laotians) which are used in designating the ones
and the others.

Phais. Neither do the Phais constitute a separate racial group.
They are Khas who are in the process of being transformed, Khas
crossed with either Lus or Laotians according as their neighbors have
been representatives of the first or the second of these races. Although
after this contact they have begun to police themselves and to bring
their way of life into conformity with that of the Lus or Laotians, they
are nonetheless subject to the same regime as the Khas in respect to
taxes and other matters.

563 Lus. The Lus, who are natives of the Sip-Song Pan-Nas, did
175 not come and settle in any great numbers in the territory of Luang-
Prabang until long after the Laotians, and then only in order to flee
the war which was desolating their own land, or simply because they
hoped to find better living conditions in this territory. The immigra-
tion took place in an entirely peaceful manner, and since that time
the Lus have not ceased to live on good terms with the Laotians, whose
mores and dress they have generally adopted and by whom they will
soon be completely assimilated.

563 Khos, Meos, Yaos. These various names designate natives
whose racial type, dress and hair do ending in a queue unquestionably
denote a Chinese origin, and who do not differ from one another except

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traditions and the annals which I have been able to consult, they are the descendants of the last kings of the land before the Cham invasion. The kings of Cambodia have had to appeal to them for help on one or two critical occasions, and it was in return for services rendered that the king of Cambodia, up until recent times, used to send them presents every year (annual tribute, according to them, payment of which stopped only five years ago).

They have never been willing to recognize our authority. The king of Pa-Tao-Ia, who is situated on the Laotian side, twice attacked the Government Commissioners of Stung-Treng when the latter were making a tour of inspection in this region, first in December 1894 and a second time in January 1897. They were given a severe lesson this second time, for the village was entirely destroyed and they suffered many losses. The Sadete Loum (the Master of water) settled on the Annamite side alongside the Master of fire after the affair, and since that time has given no further orders to our faithful Djarais.

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APPENDIX XIX NOTE ON THE MEOS

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The Meo has a savage and distrustful character. He does not like the presence of foreigners, or even of people of his own race. Clinging to the side of a mountain, and always as high up as possible, he asks only to be allowed to live in peace in his wild solitude and bodes no ill to anyone provided he is left alone and independent.

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He is a great hunter of wild beasts and large game. More industrious than the Thais, he makes all his farming implements himself (picks and shovels), as well as his wooden buckets and mills for grinding maize and paddy. He raises fine poultry, pigs, oxen, goats and horses with particular care and success. If he stays in one place for any length of time he also produces, in addition to the maize and rice which form the basis of his food supply and the opium which he smokes, very fine eggplants, gourds, sweet potatoes and non-sweetened batatas very much like the common potato, sorrel, green beans and all the French vegetables whose seeds are given him. On his heights he cultivates the fruit trees which merely vegetate in the plains, such as the peach tree, and the peaches which he harvests can compete without any fear with those of our own country.

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The Meo climbs like a cat. Over sheer paths, up ladders composed of a single bamboo pole standing upright in which notches are cut at regular intervals which are large enough for two toes, the Meo

172 transformation of a Khmer dvarapala (guardian of the gate) into a
 171 Buddha of Laos. The pious hands of the faithful have restored this
 sculpture according to the rules of the artistic canon of Laos by means
 of limestone mortar. Finally, the discovery at the beginning of the
 year 1951 of a magnificent Khmer Jaya Buddha of the thirteenth century
 opens up new horizons on the influence of King Jayavarman VII in this
 southern part of his empire, although his role in this country was
 already known to us by the discovery in 1903 at Say Fong of the in-
 scription named "stele of the hospitals" (see appendix: Vientiane).

At Luang Prabang the stele of the 900 Vishnu discovered in 1917
 had already shown that Brahmanism [14] had apparently been in vogue
 here for a short while. When a certain number of Buddhist sculptures
 of the twelfth to thirteenth centuries were brought to light during the
 war, the theory had to be revised according to which Buddhism was
 not introduced into the kingdom of Luang Prabang before the four-
 teenth century of our era.

• 175 Thus, it is principally in the thirteenth century that the Khmer
 empire exerted its maximum influence on the provinces of northern
 Laos. But, as Mr. Coedès very correctly observes, the thirteenth
 century found the whole of Eurasia under the hands of the Mongols.
 Ever since his accession as grand Khan, Kubla Khan, grandson of
 Genghis Khan and conqueror of China, sought to obtain the oath of
 vassalage from the foreign sovereigns who were in the habit of giving
 it to the Chinese T'ang dynasty. Although these same Sino-
 Mongolian armies were always defeated or only temporarily success-
 ful, their attack produced deep repercussions. The most important of
 these was the advent of the power of the Thais in the basin of the
 Menam and in Burma with all its results for Cambodia, the principal-
 ities of the Mekong and those of the Malay Peninsula.

HISTORICAL LAOS OF THE XIVth CENTURY TO THE PRESENT DAY

The end of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth
 centuries saw the establishment of principalities in the valley of
 the Menam and their internal struggles. The weakening of the
 principality of Soukhotai favored the formation of the state of Laos.

Fa Ngoum (1316-1374) reigned from 1353 to 1374. This king
 was the true founder of the kingdom of Laos. He spent part of his
 childhood as an exile in Cambodia where he was brought up by a
 religious scholar of the capital. When he was sixteen years old,
 King Jayavarmānparamēvara [15] gave him in marriage to his

daughter, Princess Nang Yot Keo. At an indeterminate date which must come between 1340 and 1350, he was given the command of an army destined to reconquer the kingdom of his fathers. According to the Laotian chronicle, the victorious advance of this army enabled Fa Ngoum to declare himself king of Lan Xan. He immediately demanded the submission of all the Thai princes of Mekong. The center of resistance to Fa Ngoum was Phai Nam (spiny bamboos) because of the impenetrable vegetable belt which protected it like veritable ramparts. Fa Ngoum seized it by means of the classical trick of ornamenting missiles with gold and silver, then pretending to retreat and then pouncing on the enemy at the moment when they had scattered to gather the precious metal. In memory of this episode, the town was baptized Vieng Kham which means "circled with gold" and which later became Vientiane, "circled with sandalwood." Fa Ngoum organized his kingdom with force and reigned as a despot. Complaints were made and the king of Cambodia advised him to be moderate. Fa Ngoum then requested that a mission be sent him from Cambodia consisting of religious and lettered men, and of artisans. This mission introduced the orthodox books of Buddhism and a statue of the Buddha (Prabang) which had been presented in the eleventh century to the Khmer sovereign by the king of Ceylon. Prabang thus became the safeguard of the kingdom.

Up until recent years this tradition led one to believe that the introduction of Buddhism into Laos dated from Fa Ngoum. The discovery of a certain number of Buddhist sculptures of Khmer manufacture of the twelfth century A. D., has destroyed this theory (see below: Introduction of Buddhism to Laos).

After a series of wars, Fa Ngoum died in 1373 at the age of fifty-eight. His successor Sam Sen Thai reigned from 1373 to 1416. He kept [16] peace in his kingdom and passed on to his successor a prosperous kingdom, well established and living in peace, and at the same time dreaded by its neighbors.

The fifteenth century saw a succession of sovereigns about whom history has nothing in particular to tell. Let us mention, however, a war with the emperor of Annam. The first part of the sixteenth century passes under the reign of King Phothisarath (1506-1547), a pious Buddhist. One of his most famous actions is the edict against the cult of Phis. Setthathirath came into power in 1548 after a war with the Burmese. His death was followed by a troubled period. The beginning of the seventeenth century is particularly obscure, but in 1637 a great king called Soulligna Vongsa (1637-1694) ascended

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175 the throne. During his reign the kingdom of Lan Xan became again a powerful state. It was at this time that the Dutchman van Wusthoff (1641) visited Vientiane, followed in 1666 by Father Marini (see appendix: Vientiane). This era was one of prosperity for the country.

The eighteenth century brought tragedy to Lan Xan. The country found itself divided into two factions and the two kingdoms of Vientiane and of Luang Prabang did not cease to tear each other apart, thus playing into the hands of Siam and Annam. In the course of the nineteenth century, King Anou (1805-1828) attempted to bring back some of its former pomp to the kingdom of Vientiane. A disastrous war with Siam brought about the systematic destruction of the town of Vientiane and the Siamese domination of the left bank of the Mekong. In 1831 the kingdom of Vientiane even became a Siamese province. Its disappearance led Siam to exert its suzerainty on the principality of Luang Prabang. Since then [17] Siamese influence became more and more marked in these regions, and two royal commissioners were still assisting the king of Luang Prabang when August Pavie arrived at this town (see appendix).

It is well known that, through the intervention of this friend of Laos, Siam renounced "all claim to the whole territory on the left bank of the Mekong and to the islands in the river." In 1895, His Highness Oun Kham, king of Luang Prabang, received from the representative of France official recognition of the kingdom by the French government. However, in spite of the directives given by Pavie, the Franco-Siamese treaty of 1893 could not be satisfactory either for Laos or for Siam. This error was the result of political policy in regard to England. A partial ratification was necessary, which was accomplished in the treaties of 1904 and 1907.

The accession of His Royal Highness Sisavang Vong in 1904 opened a new era for the kingdom of Lan Xan which ended in the independence of Laos within the framework of the French Union.

[18]

RELIGION

BUDDHISM

779 The Life of Buddha.

Buddhism, the official religion of Laos, is of Indian origin. The story of Sakyamuni, its founder, is without doubt one of the questions most discussed by western science. As Mr. Foucher points out, there is no event in his life, however simple, about which the

forms of Buddhism: the Mahayana or Great Vehicle, and the Hinayana or Little Vehicle. "One must beware of contrasting too violently the two Vehicles, as is often done. They were held together by many and subtle bonds." However in our days a Laotian Hinayanist and a Mongol Mahayanist have nothing in common.

Roughly, the essential difference between the two doctrines is that Hinayana considers the Buddha not as a superior man but as a man, while Mahayana deified Sakyamuni, who, without being a god, was as much as or more than a deity. Activity, formerly condemned, is glorified, sanctified on condition that it is freed from personal interests and is used for the salvation of others. Individual salvation has absolute value only if it contributes to universal salvation. The nirvana of the Hinayanist must be denounced as a scandalous exaltation of self. Bodhi, the supreme knowledge which makes Buddhas, is accessible to all beings. The saint is the Bodhisattva, who is on the point of reaching nirvana, yet remains during periods of incalculable successive existences to save [22] souls. The Mahayanist universe, which has grown immeasurably is filled with an infinite multitude of Buddhas. Many Bodhisattvas exist: the principal ones are Avalokitesvara, Maitreya, Manjousri, Vajrapani, etc. Besides, each Buddha and each Bodhisattva has been doubled by a dhyani-Buddha, a contemplative Buddha (spiritual Buddha). To the belief in nirvana proclaimed by the Hinayana, the Mahayanists add an infinite series of paradises, the "pure Grounds" (this notion is Iranian) where souls saved by the grace of the Bodhisattva are born again in the symbolical lotus.

Mahayana now flourishes in central Asia, in Tibet, China, Japan and in Vietnam, was in vogue in Java, and in the ancient Khmer empire from the ninth to the thirteenth century. Its influence is found in certain sculptures of Luang Prabang (see appendix). Hinayana is practised at the present time in Ceylon, Burma, Siam, Cambodia and Laos.

Introduction of Buddhism to Laos.

According to certain documents, Buddhism was introduced to Laos by Buddhaghosa. This legend is too popular in other Buddhist countries of the Indochinese peninsula for it to be given any credit here. Laotian tradition tells us that Fa Ngoum had a mission come from Cambodia which brought not only the sacred books of orthodox Buddhism but also Brahmanic texts whose traces can still be found today. This tradition, which offers greater proofs than the legend, fixed the date of the introduction of Buddhism to Luang Prabang in

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175 the fourteenth century. Archaeological discoveries made in recent
 177 years in the region of Luang Prabang and more recent ones in the
 779 neighborhood of Vientiane may enable this important event in the religious history of Laos to be moved back more than two centuries.

[23] The Pagoda.

346 "Laotians liked to place their pagodas on high points, but their
 778 marked taste for the edge of the water made them prefer the neighborhood of rivers. This location of pagodas is a natural consequence of
 [792] the relations between bonzes and inhabitants. The former drew their livelihood from the latter, and these are crowded on the river banks." In principle the pagoda consists of three elements:

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- 1) The buildings connected directly with the cult: vat, chapels, libraries; that, standing landmarks and niches;
 - 2) The surrounding enclosures, exterior and interior;
 - 3) The buildings for the immediate use of the inhabitants of the pagoda: monastery [bonzerie], cells for the bonzes, reception halls.

The vat consists of a large hall furnished with a pedestal on which stands the statue of the Buddha often accompanied by a preaching pulpit. The columns and walls are frequently ornamented with paintings.

Among the annexes of the vat, the most numerous are the chapels which are in the form either of delicate buildings or small compound halls.

The that is a votive and sometimes a funereal monument. (See appendix on Vientiane).

[788] The only piece of furniture always found in the vat is the preaching pulpit, an elegant construction, often made of gilded wood. By way of furniture there are a few seats for the chiefs of the bonzes, particularly for the torch bearer. Finally, particularly in the region of Luang Prabang, one finds the hang-lin, a curious spout-shaped object, with elegant decoration, which is used for sprinkling the Buddhas on great feast days (cf. the New Year). These various finely carved objects are usually made of gilded wood and are sometimes inlaid with enamelled lead [24] whose brilliant gleam makes them sparkle. The manuscript chests are usually collected in the libraries, piled up in the shape of an inverted pyramid; they are generally carved and gilded.

[27]

175.10 -----175.88

25: Brodrick--90 [2]
116, 162, 361, 175.63

S-3

(1939) 1948

Laotians

"Only ten Europeans lived in Houaphan.

Xieng-Khouang, about three thousand six hundred feet up, lies, all the same, in a valley surrounded with high hills. There is a new European quarter, by no means exclusively inhabited by Europeans, and the pagodas are among the most archaically planned of all the Laos land. (2)

2. Tran-ninh was for long ruled by independent chieftains until the province was annexed in 1830 by the King of Vientiane who, six years later, had to cede the territory to the Annamese Emperor. It was the French who added the province to the realm of Luang-Prabang."

116, 797, 175.64

Around 1597 Bellosso and Gonzalez "dared" to wander adventurously across South Annam and even Champa in search of the king of Cambodia who had taken refuge in Laos. In 1608 another adventurer in the grand manner, de Brito (2), dreamed of ex-

2. Philippe de Brito Nicole died in Pégou, preferring impalement to prostration (sumbaya) before the king. For the same reason, other Portuguese adventurers of the grand period were boiled in oil in Siam.

tending his ephemeral sovereignty in Burma not only over Chieng Mai and Siam, but as far as Luang Prabang. His plans failed. The geographer [53] of Malacca, Godinho de Eredia, compiled a whole collection of information on this remote kingdom about the same time.

But the missionaries, it would seem, were the most persevering in their efforts to remedy the isolation of Laos, particularly the Portuguese Jesuit Cardim (1). The latter

1. Father Cardim, Relations della Provincia del Giappone. Rome, 1643.

has given various accounts of his efforts and those of his predecessors. If we are to believe him, three Portuguese traders had already entered through Cambodia when Antonio Gancalves Cavallerio persuaded the Superior of the Jesuits of Macao to send

81: Huard--52-53

D-2 (no date) 1941

Laotians-2

116, 797, 175.64

several Fathers there in 1624, almost immediately after the first incident of the bar of Siam. Father Cardim and a Japanese companion left Macao on December 13, 1625 to go and study the language at Ayuthia [HD: then the capital of Siam], but sickness and reprisals against the acts of the Spaniards in 1629 caused the project to fail once again (H. Bernard). It was to be resumed later by Father Borelli and Father J. Baptiste Bonel, the latter of whom "died in Laos or Layès" (A. de Rhodes).

10: d'Orleans

T-3

(1891-92) 1894

Laos

563, 634, 721, 175.72

Ethnic subgroups

[LSS: For the history of the family of Deo Van Tri, chief of the Lai district and for the history of the wars in the area of Laichau and Luang Prabang, see Indochina, category 116, pp. 204-209.]

177.10 ----- 177.88

10: d'Orleans--362-363
116, 276, 439, 655, 177.27
636.27

T-3

(1891-92) 1894

Laos
Siam

"... The opium monopoly has been set up in Luang Prabang by the Siamese. Not content with having, during the past century, ruined and depopulated the valley of the Mekong, and with weighing it down with taxation, they now seem anxious to crush its trade and arrest its growth. From our point of view, it is a matter of indifference to us if the relations between Luang Prabang and China become less close and friendly, and we may even turn this change to our profit, for the caravans which were wont to bring opium down the routes parallel with the Mekong, will find it answer [sic] their purpose to branch off in the direction of the Black River, and to effect their exchanges with Upper Tonkin.

I can answer for the fact that during the past year only one caravan reached Luang Prabang from the north, this consisting of sixty mules from Xieng [363] Hong, which took a month upon the journey by short stages, eight being loaded with iron, four with tea, and the rest with Chinese groceries, sugar, opium and a little silk."

10: d'Orleans--333

T-3

(1891-92) 1894

Laos

116, 532, 778, 793, 177.35

[LSS: in Luang Prabang] "Above the market and built against the hill is the residence of one of the four leading bonzes from whom we had a visit yesterday; and upon going to see him there we find that the interior is ornamented with coloured designs and pictures, given him by Frenchmen, of the Eiffel Tower and so forth, with a small chapel in one corner and a library of religious books, many of which are rolled up in palm leaves. The only curious object in the adjoining pagoda is a wooden statue of Buddha (Pasine), in a crouching attitude, like that of a monkey when scratching his chin. The skull is very depressed and misshapen; and it is possible that those who offered the image were desirous of depicting the incident in his life, when having complained to God of the temptation which the flesh evoked in him, he received by way of reply a violent blow on the head in order to crush his carnal appetites. "

10: d'Orleans--370 [2]

T-3

(1891-92) 1894

Laos

116, 353, 643, 177.35

"We gather information as to the route which we are to follow from the second King of Luang Prabang, who has just returned that way from Bangkok. He lives near us in an enormous room, which his baggage has transformed into a veritable bric-à-brac shop. There are glass-globes, imitation paper flowers under glass, European hats, cooking utensils, and cruets, indeed, a little of everything which has attracted the prince in the way of European civilisation. After living twenty-two months at Bangkok, he is returning to Luang Prabang slowly by easy stages. Elegantly turned out, he seems franker than his brother, and after exchanging visits he sends us a present of cocoanuts and bananas."

"Though the natural products of Luang Prabang are so varied, the cost of transport over so long a distance from the coast would reduce the profits very considerably, though I think that the complaints of the Chinese traders as to business being carried on at a loss must be an exaggeration, for if so why do they carry it on?

In any event, it is difficult to form a precise estimate of the commerce of the principality. According to the Siamese the exports from the Laos region, which includes the country between Strung Treng and Xiangsen in one direction, and Xieng Mai and Attopen in the other, amount to about £900,000, and if this estimate is correct the proportion of Luang Prabang must be very small. Macey gives the exports of benzoin at £40,000, but if this was so at one time the total must have decreased very much.

But trifling as the commercial movement of Luang Prabang may be, it is of interest to us, because of the situation of the town upon the Mekong, nearly in the centre of the Laos and in the vicinity of Tonkin, to see what share we may hope to have in it and what profit can be derived from it. Opinions vary very much upon the subject, and Mr. Archer, the British Consul, whose statistical reports as to the trade of this region are well worth careful study, is of opinion that there is little to fear from French competition, the cost of transport being too great, and with regard to steam navigation, he does not deem it possible upon the Mekong, on account of the rapids upon the other [359] hand. I have read several articles in the Bangkok Times to the effect that the French have great facilities for getting into their hands all trade upon the Mekong, and that to guard against this

Siam ought to push on the construction of railways with all speed. Then, again, Mr. Macey and Captain Devrez assert that the Tonkin routes are much shorter, easier, and less expensive than those leading to Bangkok.

Whatever the truth may be, of one thing I can speak positively, and that is that the greater part of the commercial current of Luang Prabang either comes from or goes to Bangkok. This current follows one of two routes. It either proceeds from Luang Prabang to Paklay by the Mekong; Paklay to Pitchai or Ontaradit by land and from thence to Bangkok down the Menam (this being the way by which we returned), a voyage of twenty-six days going down and fifty-two coming up. The second route is from Luang Prabang to Nong Kay by the Mekong; from Nong Kay to Korat and from Korat to Bangkok, this being rather the longer of the two. These routes, though shorter than that which brings Luang Prabang and Tonquin within a month of each other, have the advantage of being safer both by water and by land, there being no rapids on the Menam, while the roads are wide enough for elephants to travel easily along them and might easily have rails laid down. Owing to the facility of the communications, the cost of transport between Luang Prabang and Bangkok is if not cheaper, at all events not dearer than those via the Black River, and as I have been over the two routes myself I am in a [360] position to make the comparison. M. Massie, moreover, has arrived at the same conclusion."

10: d'Orleans--330

T-3

(1891-92) 1894

Laos

116, 443, 651, 177.44

Siam

636.44

[LSS: in Luang Prabang] "In the market, each vendor has his own special stall, while the representatives of the same trade are all placed together, and a tax of twenty-five cowries is collected from each of them every morning by soldiers told off for the purpose, whereas the street hawkers are exempted from all dues."

10: d'Orleans--360
116, 441, 563, 177. 44
636. 44

T-3 (1891-92) 1894

Laos
France

"The trade of Laos, like that of the greater part of Siam, is carried on by the Chinese, who form a sort of freemasonry among one another against the foreigner and are constantly pushing forward their advance posts. Masters of the Customs, more intelligent, more hard working, more temperate and more rapacious than the Siamese, they constitute the commercial class, and they have a way of insinuating themselves into the secrets of the natives and transferring their money into their own pockets which we neither could nor would wish to imitate. Our task is a higher one, and it consists, upon the one hand, in undertaking and carrying out such enterprises in the way of mining as I have described above, and upon the other in supplying the native or Chinese middlemen with the raw material and with our national goods upon as reasonable terms as English or German merchandise."

6: Goudal--32-33
116, 466, 651, 177.46
636.46

S-3

(1934) 1938

Laotians-1-3
France

Laos. -- An Order of 12 May 1914 regulated labour dues for natives and assimilated Asiatics between 18 and 60 years of age who inhabit the territory of Laos.

Registered Laotians are required to provide 16 days' labour per annum, which may be commuted at the rate of 0.40 piastre, while 'Khas' must provide 20 days.

The commutation of labour dues is optional. Labour conscripts may only be recruited within a radius of 100 kilometres from the place of employment or at a maximum of five days' march for the outward and return journeys. No wages are paid for days thus worked, but each day taken up by the journey from the village to the place of work is paid at the rate of 30 cents. At least one-quarter of the labour called up must be employed solely on communal work. The commutation fee is fixed at 0.25 piastre.

An Order of 18 June 1929 increased the commutation fee to 0.30 piastre.

An important Circular issued on 21 June 1934 laid down the measures to be taken by the Residents in Laos to secure that the recruiting and employment of requisitioned labour should be carried out in the best conditions and with due attention to the requirements of health and hygiene.

6: Goudal--32-33
116, 466, 651, 177.46
636.46

S-3

(1934) 1938

Laotians-2
France

The recruitment of labour must be carried out with the greatest care and under the supervision and responsibility of the indigenous authorities. Sick and infirm persons, elderly persons and children may not be employed in any circumstances. When the workplace is far from the village, the workers must be carried in service lorries or canoes.

Before work is begun the encampments must be carefully organised. The workers' food must be the object of strict supervision, and every care must be taken to avoid victimisation of the workers by itinerant traders.

As a rule a dresser must be made responsible for the health in all workplaces employing at least 50 workers. The workers must be supplied with tools and implements so as to secure a maximum individual output.

In the management and organisation of workplaces, every effort must be made to co-ordinate administrative supervision, the work of the indigenous authorities and the technical instructions issued by the public works services.

It is thus clear that the regulation of labour dues has undergone practically the same evolution in all the countries of the Union. The old system of compulsory labour, which in theory was subject [33] to no restrictions, has been reduced to a reasonable number of days by the French authorities, while the work exacted from the inhabitants has been

6; Goudal--32-33
116, 466, 651, 177.46
636.46

S-3

(1934) 1938

Laotians -3
France

restricted to the district in which the latter live, so as to avoid long absences from home and transfer to distant places. The regulations recommend the avoidance of mass levies likely to empty the villages of their able-bodied population, and discourage the requisitioning of labour during periods of agricultural activity. The introduction of certain measures for the protection of the workers' health (infirmaries in the work-places, etc.), together with the compulsory supply of appropriate tools and implements has certainly introduced a more humane element in the labour system. Finally, the general adoption of commutation fees has led to dues being treated as a tax (in three countries, the dues are included in the personal tax). Only for certain tribes in mountainous districts is the character of the former compulsory labour system still maintained."

6: Goudal--42-43

S-3

(1934) 1938

Laotians

116, 466, 482, 653, 177.46

France

636.46

"In Laos, the regulation of compulsory labour for public purposes has been the subject of a number of legislative measures, including an Order by the Senior Resident of 27 June 1933 which closely resembles that issued by the Governor-General of 5 February 1932.

Moreover, in the countries of the Union where this form of labour is still permitted, Orders are issued periodically establishing the [43] maximum weight of the load carried by porters and the rates of wages payable to such workers. Annual reports are also sent to the central administrative authorities on the value and usefulness of requisitioned labour. If the present effort made by the authorities is continued, it is practically certain that in the near future compulsory labour levies for transport work and large-scale public works will become a thing of the past."

6: Goudal--161-162
116, 466, 671, 177.46
636.46

S-3

(1934) 1938

Laotians-1-2
France

"Laos--Sections 197-201 of the Laotian Civil Code provide for two methods of assessing workmen's compensation, according to whether the accident was or was not the consequence of an operation or dangerous work for which no special remuneration was laid down to offset the risk. If the accident is caused by dangerous work, the liability of the employer is regulated as follows: in the case of death or permanent total incapacity, the victim or his dependants are entitled, according to their situation, to an allowance amounting to 100 piastres for officials, 80 piastres for an employee of the administration or a skilled worker exercising a remunerative trade, and 50 piastres for all other workers.

These allowances are reduced to one-half or to one-quarter of the stated amount when the victim's working capacity is reduced, even permanently, by 50 or 25 per cent.

In case of temporary incapacity, the person liable in case of accident is required to pay as damages to the injured party the cost of the treatment entailed and in addition, throughout the whole period of incapacity, full wages in the case of an official, 0.55 piastre a day in the case of an employee of the administration or a skilled worker, and 0.25 piastre a day in the case of all other persons. [162]

All the above-mentioned allowances are reduced by one-half if the injured person is under age and has undertaken the operation or dangerous work with the authorisation of his parents.

6: Goudal--161-162
116, 466, 671, 177.46
636.46

S-3

(1934) 1938

Laotians-2
France

Among other classes of work, the Civil Code classifies the following as dangerous: scaling of tall trees, going down wells or underground caves or passages, diving into a deep or rapidly flowing part of a river, the capturing of wild animals, the training of untamed animals, pursuit of criminals, etc.

When, on the other hand, the accident is not the result of dangerous work, but is nevertheless incurred in the course of, or arising out of, paid employment, the employer is required, in case of death or permanent incapacity, to pay to the victim an allowance equal to one-half of the corresponding indemnity established for injuries caused by dangerous work. In case of death he must also pay the cost of burial or cremation.

If the accident results in minor injuries, the employer must provide the injured person with medical attendance and food throughout the period of temporary incapacity.

Finally, in no case is the employer responsible for accidents resulting from unavoidable circumstances. "

6. Goudal--166
116, 466, 647, 177.46
636.46

S-3

(1934) 1938

Laotians
France

"In Laos, no local labour inspectorate has so far been established. An Order of 22 December 1932 required the inspector of political and administrative affairs to carry out the duties of local labour inspector in addition to his own work. Subsequently, as the ~~first~~ class administrator of the civil services who carried out these double duties was not replaced, the chief administrative officer of the Cammon province was entrusted with the duties of labour supervisor for all mining undertakings situated in his area.

It would seem that the cuts in the estimates, which led to a reduction in the staff of the various local inspectorates, have resulted in an unfortunate decline in the activity of these services. (1)

1. We read, for example, in the Annual Report of the Tonking Labour Inspectorate for the period 1 July 1933-30 June 1934: 'The attachment of the labour inspectorate to the Fifth Bureau has resulted in greatly reducing the sphere of activity of the labour inspector, whose time is mainly taken up by his duties as chief of the Bureau of Economic Affairs; his tours of inspection have thus been reduced to those which are strictly necessary'.

25: Brodrick--85 S-3

(1939) 1948

Laotians
France

116, 131, 489, 177.48

636.48

"The Laos was, and indeed still is, a country happy in its isolation. It is land quite difficult of access. There are no railways. There is only one all-weather road crossing the country and that in the Lower Laos. Moreover, in my day, at least, that is to say on the very eve of the last World War, you did not just start off for the Laos as you would for any other part of Indo-China, discreet inquiries were made. The French liked to keep their Laos uncontaminated by foreigners. (1)

1. The total area of the Laos is just under 90,000 square miles and the population, at the last census, was just over one million. There is no all-weather road right up the Mekong Valley and the highways from the east cannot be used during the rains except for that across the Lower Laos from Dong-Ha to Kabao. Much of the Laos is, therefore, except for air-communication, cut off from the outer world for at least five months out of every year."

3: Robequain--94
116, 496, 177.49
636.49

S-5

(no date) 1944

Laotians
France

"Laos still lacks railways. Some years ago surveys were completed on the projected line from Tan Ap to Thakhek, which had been selected as the shortest and most convenient route between the coast of Annam and the Mekong. About twenty kilometers of rail were laid from Tan Ap as far as Xom Cuc, and téléférique built to hoist material and supplies from the workyards to Mu Gia Pass which will be traversed by a tunnel at an altitude of 370 meters; a service road was built in order to assure the easy maintenance of the téléférique. The roadbed beyond Thakhek was also started, but budgetary difficulties caused the stoppage of work."

23: Franck--346

T-2

(1924) 1926

Laotians

116, 491, 177.49

France

636.49

"Had it been in China or South America, this important trail between the two principal capitals of Laos would be impassable, in spots at least, which is the same thing so far as an overland trip is concerned, during the rainy season that was now upon us. Thanks to the few French overlords, however, mile after mile was welded together by many woven-bamboo bridges that sagged like bed-springs under our weight."

3: Robequain--113-116

S-5

(no date) 1944

Laotians-1-5

116, 133, 503, 505, 177, 50

France

636.50

"The Mekong appeared to offer a splendid means of penetrating the plateaus and mountains of Laos. At one time it was even suggested that Saigon could be one of the great ports for Southern China. As early as 1866, the Doudart de Lagrée and Francis Garnier mission realized the difficulties[114] of navigating the river above Kratié. This large river, as a matter of fact, is still very young as far as physical geography is concerned, or rather, a series of recent and still only partially explained tectonic episodes have renewed its youth. It consists of a chain of calm-surfaced reaches, separated by rapids or falls. The chief obstacle to navigation is at Khône where the arms of the river, spread out over an area several kilometers wide, drop 15 meters through torrential and rock-studded channels or cataracts. Here precisely is the border between Cambodia and Laos. Other rapids are scattered both up and down stream, making navigation by launch difficult and uncertain throughout entire sections between Kratié and Savannakhet. It is only at Savannakhet ('the gateway to paradise') that the great navigable reaches begin which permit launches to sail as far as several kilometers above Vientiane without breaking bulk.

Europeans were eager to tame the Mekong. As early as 1890 the Messageries

3: Robequain--113-116 S-5 (no date) 1944
116, 133, 503, 505, 177.50
636.50

Laotians-2
France

Fluviales de Cochinchine had organized a steamship line which, with the help of some trans-shipment, operated as far as Khône. For more than two years the launch, Argus, tried to get past the Khône barrier through the channels which canoes sometimes used in descending the river. In view of the failure of these attempts, a narrow gauge railway was built across Khône Island, and by this means gunboats and then launches were carried to the upper river in 1893.

Conditions of navigation have been improved since then, but scouring the river channels has not always produced the desired results, since the river's reactions are difficult to predict; buoying had been improved up to 1925; more than a thousand towers, buoys and landmarks had been built. Hundred-ton launches, drawing one and one half meters, can reach as far as Khône, at high water, about three months a year; in other months, the section between Kratié and Khône, much of which had to be traversed by canoe up to 1900, can now be covered, with only one trans-shipment, by a short thirty-ton launch which can manage the sharp turns of the narrow channels. Above Khône, the most difficult passage is through the sandstone canyon of Kemmarat, where the river attains [115] a depth of eighteen meters during the heavy floods and the current in some rapids is from nine to ten knots. Since 1910 more powerful launches have been put into service, and were later supplied with semi-Diesel engines; they have gradually reduced the number of changes but the Keng Sa rapids are still impassable at low water.

3: Robequain--113-116
116, 133, 503, 505, 177.50
636.50

S-5 (no date) 1944

Laotians-3
France

and necessitate trans-shipments to motor-canoes.

In 1895 a small gunboat, the Lagrandière, went up above the Savannakhet-Vientiane reaches to within 50 kilometers of the Yunnan frontier, about 2,500 kilometers from the sea and 400 meters above sea-level; this was a purely sporting exploit. Since then other steamboats have gone up as far as Luang Prabang, but it was realized that regular traffic could not be maintained through one section, dotted with dangerous rapids. Nevertheless, the trip between the two Laotian capitals previously made by native canoes plying upstream, and by rafts going downstream, has been very much speeded up since 1930 by the use of motor canoes.

In brief, progress is summed up in the following figures; in 1900, at low water, it took 65 days or more to go from Saigon to Luang Prabang; in 1909 the time was reduced to a maximum of 50 days; in 1937 the upstream trip took 37 days, downstream 27; and at high water, it took 27 or 22 days, respectively.

In spite of all this, French Upper Laos is still farther from Saigon by water than Saigon is from Marseille. Even below Vientiane in Lower Laos, the transport capacity of the Mekong depends on the obstacles encountered between Savannakhet and Khône. It is difficult to cut down the present length of the time needed for the journey: the narrowness of the channels and the limited power of the engines which can negotiate them do not

3: Robequain--113-116
116, 133, 503, 505, 177.50
636.50

S-5

(no date) 1944

Laotians-4
France

permit increasing the useful cargo beyond 100 tons. At low water, trans-shipment is a heavy burden on shipping. In 1936 only 4,644 tons of freight passed the port of Khone going downstream (10) and 5,286 tons upstream.

10. Excluding teak logs which are floated down the river.

Thus the high hopes for the Mekong as a means of transportation have been dashed. Experts believe that if additional improvements could increase the traffic to 25,000 tons a year, [116] this is a maximum which would be hard to surpass. Railways and highways will therefore have to furnish transportation which will be justified in the future by our reasonable expectations for an enlarged Laotian economy, if not by its extent at present. (11)

11. The arguments in favor of the water route are set forth by Colonel Bernard in the Bulletin du Comité de l'Indochine, February 20, 1936. Navigation on the Mekong has undergone great changes since the end of 1937, at the expiration of the contract of the Campagne Saigonnaise de Navigation et de Transports, which had replaced the Messageries Fluviales. Steam launches no longer negotiate the Kemmarat narrows;

3: Robequain--113-116

S-5

(no date) 1944

Laotians-5

116, 133, 503, 505, 177, 50

France

636.50

there is no longer a regular service between Paksé and Savannakhet. From Savannakhet to Vientiane service is now assured by a company employing flat-bottomed barges and from Vientiane to Luang Prabang and Xieng Sen by motor canoes."

10: d'Orleans--300-301
116, 436, 455, 525, 651, 177.52
636.52

T-3

(1891-92) 1894

Laos
Siam

"In addition to the forced labour, there is, the capitation tax, the opium tax, and the monopoly of the tchoum-tchoum, but the monopoly of gaming, which is the source of large revenue in Siam itself, has been suppressed here by the Siamese as being immoral. It is the same with the speculation upon the money exchange, which is not yet resorted to in Luang Prabang. In the valley of Ménam, more especially, the money in use is composed of earthenware counters, the circulation of which is suspended or the value altered by a Government decree, large profits being thus secured in very arbitrary fashion. Another source of profit [301] for the treasury of Luang Prabang is the produce of the customs, there being a tax of three per cent. upon the merchandise and of a basket of salt upon each canoe, which comes up from the south with a load of it."

10: d'Orleans--333-334

T-3

(1891-92) 1894

Laos

116, 346, 532, 177.53

[LSS: in Luang Prabang] "Among the other pagodas are Ouate Tiomsi, which contains nothing remarkable, and Ouate Pahope, with a good deal of wood carving and frescoes representing animals and scenes in the life of Buddha, to say nothing of pictures of Frenchwomen in the dress of the First Empire, which may possibly have been brought here by the traveller Monhot some forty years ago. Beyond these are Ouate Paphay and Ouate Pakay, both of which are very graceful and have beautifully carved facades. The whole effect reminds me in a remote measure of the Hindoo architecture, and among the figures on the wood-carving of the doors is [334] one of Nangmanouba, a woman standing up on a dragon, and another of a personage wearing a costume very similar to that which was in vogue with us during the middle ages."

7: Thompson--371-372

J-4

(no date) 1937

Laotians

116, 565, 567, 177, 56

France

636.56

"The people were simply divided into slaves and freemen. Of the former there were three kinds: slaves for debt, by sale, or by capture. Slave-trading used to be enormously profitable, for the offspring of slaves were born into perpetual slavery. In 1880 the King of Siam made a generous reform. The descendants of slaves were henceforth to be freemen, and it was made much easier for debt slaves to buy their freedom. No mention was made, however, of captured slaves, but severe penalties were meted out to men convicted of slave-trading. One of the first steps taken by the French was the abolition of the slave trade, despite its affecting important Laotian, Cambodian, Siamese, and even Burmese commercial interests. Next, debt slavery was attacked in 1896, and for this Tournier found an ingenious solution. Special attention [372] was paid to the Khas, who lived in a state of serfdom, and this provoked a series of revolts. Their enfranchisement was begun in 1898, and nowadays a form of patron-client relationship has been evolved, but the bond is easy. It is almost impossible to wipe the slate clean, for many of the slaves resist change, since it is an easier way of getting rid of a debt than by working as freemen."

26: Brodrick--60

S-3

(1939) 1944

Laotians

116, 631, 177.63

France

636.63

"Most of the Laos region is under direct French administration, but the kingdom of Luang-Prabang (consisting of the provinces of Luang-Prabang, of Houaphan and of the Fifth Military Territory) is a 'protectorate.' Until 1893 the Siamese were in effective possession of about one-half of the Luang-Prabang realm, but by 1904 the French had obtained the cession of the whole of the kingdom."

68: Mouhot--85-86

N-5

(1858-61) 1864

Laotians

Siam

116, 131, 728, 631, 162, 177.63
636: 63

"A great number of the inhabitants of this province [HD: i. e. Saraburi, in Siam] are natives of Laos, and are principally captives brought from Vien Chang after the insurrection there. The provinces of Boatioume and Petchaboune are peopled by Siamese, for Laos proper only commences at M'Lôm. Boatioume, Petchaboune, Sôm, and some other provinces in the north and east, are governed by Siamese mandarins of rank more or less elevated; that is to say, several of them have the power of life and death, and are [86] then considered as viceroys. The most distant provinces belong to the empire of Siam, and form a part of it."

68: Mouhot--105-106

N-5

(1858-61) 1864

Laotians-1-2

116, 631, 122, 177.63

Siam

636.63

"On the 28th February, 1861, I arrived at the town of Chaiapume, [HD: at that time a Laotian town tributary to Siam] and presented myself before the governor to request his permission to hire some elephants or oxen to enable me to continue my journey. I showed him my French passport, and also gave him the letter from Khrom Luang, [HD: one of the brothers of the King of Siam] and another from the Governor of Korat; [HD: an important outlying province of Siam. See category 116, p. 115] but all in vain. He replied that, if I wanted oxen or elephants, there were plenty in the forest. I might easily have done without the assistance of this functionary, and procured animals from people in the village; but they would have made me pay two or three times the ordinary price, and my purse was too slenderly filled to allow of my submitting to this extortion, which would probably be repeated at every station.

The only thing left me to do, therefore, was to retrace my steps, and, leaving one of my servants at Korat with [106] my baggage, to return to Bangkok and claim aid from the consul, the ministers, or the king himself; for there is a treaty between the Governments of Siam and France, concluded by M. de Montigny, which obliges the king to afford assistance and protection to the French, and especially to missionaries and naturalists. It was a sad loss of time for me, and might occasion me serious inconvenience; for, if I were delayed, the rainy season might surprise me in the midst of the

68: Mouhot--105-106

N-5

(1858-61) 1864

Laotians-2

Siam

116, 631, 122, 177, 63

636.63

forests before I could reach a healthier region, and the consequences might be fatal. However, I was forced to submit, and I returned to Bangkok."

68: Mouhot--113 N-5
116, 579, 162, 631, 177.63
636.63

(1858-61) 1864

Laotians
Siam

"These precautions are very necessary, for Korat is a nest of robbers and assassins, the resort of all the scum of the Laotian and Siamese races. Bandits and vagrants, escaped from slavery or from prison, gather here like the vultures and wolves which follow armies and caravans. It is not that they enjoy complete immunity, for the [HD: Siamese] governor, son of Bodine, the general who conquered Battambang and the revolted provinces, is viceroy of the state, has absolute power of life and death, and is, they say, very severe, cutting off a head or a hand with little compunction. But still it is Siamese justice, 'non inviola:' there are neither gendarmes nor police; the person robbed must himself arrest the offender and bring him before the judge. Even his neighbour will give no assistance in the capture."

68: Mouhot--115

N-5

(1858-61) 1864

Laotians

Siam

116, 439, 631, 651, 177.63

636.63

"The merchants who bring silk, [HD: to Korat, Siam] which, though of inferior quality, is an important article of commerce, come from Laos, Oubone, Bassac, and Jasoutone.

The entire province of Korat comprises a number of villages, and more than eleven towns, some containing as many as fifty or sixty thousand inhabitants. This little state is simply tributary, [HD: to Siam] but on condition of furnishing the first and most considerable levy of men in case of war.

The tribute consists of gold or silver, and in several districts, amongst others those of Chaipume and Poukiéan, amounts to eight ticals a head. Some pay in silk, which is weighed by the mandarins, who, as with the cardamom at Pursat, and the langoutis at Battambang, buy a further quantity on their own account, and at their own price.

Elephants are numerous, and a great many are brought from the north of Laos as far as Muang-Lang. I should think there must be more than a thousand of these animals in each province. Oxen and buffaloes were formerly exceedingly cheap, but the distemper, which has for some years committed great ravages among the herds, has doubled or tripled the price. They are brought southward from the extreme north of East Laos, and even from the frontiers of Tonquin."

68: Mouhot--120-121 N-5

(1858-61) 1864

Laotians-
Siam

116, 609, 122, 631, 177.63
636.63

"I was again delayed a few days at Korat before I could obtain elephants, in consequence of the absence of the viceroy; but on his return he received me in a friendly manner, and gave me a letter of introduction to the governors of the provinces under his jurisdiction. He likewise furnished me with two elephants for myself and servants, and two others for my baggage; so at last I was able to set out for Chaipume. Before I started, the Chinese with whom I lodged gave me the following advice: --'Buy a tam-tam, and, wherever you halt, sound it. They will say, 'Here is an officer of the king;' robbers will keep aloof, and the authorities will respect you. If this does not answer, the only plan to get rid of all the difficulties which the Laotian officials will be sure to throw in your way is to have a good stick, the longer the better. Try it on the back of any mandarin who makes the least resistance and will not do what you wish. Put all delicacy aside. Laos is not like a country of the whites. Follow my advice, and you will find it good.'

I was, however, much better received on my second visit to Chaipume, and required neither tam-tam nor cane. The sight of the elephants and the order from the viceroy of Korat made the mandarin as supple as a glove, and he provided me with other elephants for a visit to some ruins existing about 3 leagues north of the town, at the foot of a mountain. The superstitious Laotians say that [121] these ruins contain gold, but that every one who has sought for it has been struck with madness."

68: Mouhot--129-130 N-5

(1858-61) 1864

Laotians
Siam

116, 122, 609, 631, 177.63
636.63

" [HD: Going north to Pak Lai] I soon found that, but for the letter from the governor of Korat, I should have met everywhere with the same reception as at Chaipume; however, this missive was very positively worded. Wherever I went, the authorities were ordered to furnish me with elephants, and supply me with all necessary provisions, as if I were a king's envoy. I was much amused to see these petty provincial chiefs executing the orders of my servants, and evidently in dread lest, following the Siamese custom, I should use the stick.

One of my men, to give himself importance, had tied one of these bugbears to the arms which he carried, and the sight of it alone sufficed, with the sound of the tam-tam, to inspire fear, whilst small presents judiciously distributed, and a little money to the cornacs, [HD: elephant drivers] procured me the sympathy of the people.

Most of the villages are situated about a day's journey from one another, but frequently you have to travel for three or four days without seeing a single habitation, [130] and then you have no alternative but to sleep in the jungle. "

68: Mouhot--251

N-5

(1858-61) 1864

Laotians

Siam

116, 122, 631, 177.63
636.63

"I have done everything in my power to obtain letters and passports [HD: to Laos] from the French and Siamese authorities here, [HD: i. e. in Bangkok, Siam] but all have been nearly useless. I have obtained nothing but a letter from the King's brother, [HD: Khrom Luang] who has the superintendence of the provinces north of Laos, and with that I trust to be able to get on."

68: Mouhot--256-257

N-5

(1858-61) 1864

Laotians
Siam

116, 122, 631, 177.63

636.63

"When I reached Chaiapume, I went to the governor with my letters, and asked him to lend me elephants to enable me to continue my journey, that being the only method of travelling among these mountains; but he refused me decidedly, and consequently I have been forced to retrace my steps. Here one can do nothing without the help of the people in power."

I therefore returned to Korat, and established Phrai in a [257] hut which I hired of a Chinese; and went myself to Bangkok, to procure from the authorities orders to the different governors of provinces to aid me instead of throwing obstacles in my way."

68: Mouhot--258-260 N-5

(1858-61) 1864

Laotians-1-4

116, 122, 609, 631, 177.63

Siam

636.63

"[HD: Excerpt from one of Mouhot's letters to his wife] You will be much surprised on receiving this letter to see it dated from Saraburi, [HD: in Siam] for if you have received the one I wrote in January, you must believe me to be already in Laos. But man proposes, and God disposes. However, to reassure you, I must begin by saying that I am in perfect health, and full of strength and hope. All goes well with me.

I had in fact reached Laos. I arrived at Korat after a tedious and troublesome journey, for I had only a few oxen for my baggage, and was forced to walk myself. From there I went to Chaipume, and here an animal of the mandarin species made himself great, and under the pretext of having no elephants refused me the means of going further, and was so rude and impolite to me that I determined at once to return and protest against the very insufficient protection which had been granted to me. Indeed, I could do nothing else, not being able to go on. The elephant which had brought me to Chaipume took me back to Korat, and there I found a mandarin from Bangkok, who had been sent to fetch a white elephant which had been taken in Laos. I begged him to let me join his party, and he lent me two elephants, one for my servant and luggage, and one for myself. I left Phrai at Korat, with the greater part of my possessions, having hired a room for him in the house of a Chinese, and a week afterwards found myself back at Saraburi, in company with this strange divinity (who, by the way, had

68: Mouhot--258-260 N-5

(1858-61) 1864

Laotians-2
Siam

116, 122, 609, 631, 177.63
636.63

more black than white about him), and of the grand personage who had been sent to escort him, and who had showered on him every kind of attention during the journey. He had an escort of fifty foot soldiers and several on horseback. As for me, I wanted for nothing; at every halt the mandarin sent me ducks, fish, fruit, sweetmeats, &c., and he was [259] also kind enough to allow me eight men as night-guards to watch round my fire. In return, I discovered for him in the mountains large quantities of copper, and even gold, which delighted him.

The whole province of Saraburi was in motion to do honour to the white elephant; the King and all his court are coming here; the ministers are here already to watch over him. I decided, therefore, to apply to the Siamese, hoping to obtain more from them than from the Europeans; and yesterday hearing of the arrival of Khrom Luang, the King's brother, I hastened to address myself to him. He, however, had only passed through, and was gone to Prabat, to join the King. However, I found here the man I wanted, the mandarin who has most interest in Laos, and without a letter from whom it would have been difficult to proceed. I did not know him, but I went to him to ask about the Prince, and told him what I wanted. 'I am your man,' said he; 'the Prince can only give an order for me to write a letter, such as I will give you, if you like.' I accepted gladly, and promised him in return my double-barrelled gun, which I could easily replace, 'if

68: Mouhot--258-260 N-5

(1858-61) 1864

Laotians-3
Siam

116, 122, 609, 631, 177. 63
636. 63

he would only furnish me with the means of travelling through Laos without expense, and would bring the Chaipume mandarin to reason.' The poor governor of Saraburi was with us, and had to remain more than an hour amidst a number of others kneeling on the bare ground, while I was seated on the mat of the mandarin, by his side, eating sweet-meats and drinking tea, while he dictated a letter in which he called the governor of Chaipume a fool, and threatened to deprive him of his office, and of this letter I was to be the bearer; and he promised me another general one on the morrow, in which he stated that if I did not receive efficient aid it might bring on a war; [HD: i. e. with France who was then occupying Cochin China] and this he also repeated to all the chiefs present. My cause was gained, and I could plainly see that our affairs must be going on well in Cochin China; the echo of the cannon had its effect in Siam. However, I had promised him my gun, and evidently he wished to have it before he gave me the letters [260] This morning, therefore, I took it to him all cleaned and furbished up. He was delighted with it, and gave me at once the letter for Korat and Chaipume, and to-morrow I am to have one which will carry me all through Laos without any expense but a few ticals to the cornacs. [HD: i. e. elephant drivers] Without this, judging by what I had to pay for an elephant from Korat to Chaipume, my purse would have been exhausted by the time I reached the north of Laos, and I should not have had the means of returning without

68: Mouhot--258-260 N-5

(1858-61) 1864

Laotians-4
Siam

116, 122, 609, 631, 177.63

636.63

sending to Bangkok to ask for help, which would have been a work of difficulty, and, what is worse, I should have been exposed all along the route to the insolence of these arrogant mandarins. Now, they will all humble themselves before me, taking me for some important personage sent by the Emperor Napoleon or Queen Victoria to collect butterflies, insects, and birds for them. I shall no longer travel on foot, but on elephants, and shall want for nothing. Agree, then, with me, that out of evil comes good, or rather, that God does all for the best. When at Chaipume I found myself obliged to retrace my steps, after so many fatigues, and so great a waste of money, I was only downcast for a few minutes; God almost immediately inspired me with the idea that all would turn to my advantage, and this persuasion never left me again. Unaccountably to myself, I was gayer on my return than I had been in coming, although then I was everywhere well received and kindly treated by the people. Even after my discourteous reception [HD: by the mandarin] at Chaipume, all the inhabitants came to see me, to bring me little presents, and to express their regret that they could not aid me from fear of their chief. The head of the monastery took me to see some ruins similar to those in Cambodia, and gave me a tiger-skin; and all along the road I experienced the same kindness, and numbers came to me to ask for advice and various remedies."

68: Mouhot--276-277 N-5
116, 122, 174, 609, 631, 177.63
636.63

(1858-61) 1864

Laotians-1-2
Siam

"Notwithstanding the small population of Korat, it is the chief town of a province, or rather an extensive state, containing eleven towns or boroughs, chief towns of districts, and a great number of villages, more or less populated. Fifteen days' [277] journey brings you from Korat to Bassac on the banks of the Mekon, and in the same latitude.

My intention was to proceed northwards, only stopping in the province of Louang Prabang, and then to descend the river as far as Cambodia. I hired elephants, and five days after, having passed through several villages inhabited by the descendants of ancient Siamese colonists who had taken refuge there in time of war, passing continually through forests of resin trees thinly scattered, I arrived at Ban Prang, a village where I discovered a ruined tower, and also the remains of an ancient temple. The next place I arrived at was Chaipoune, the principal Laotian town in the north, and the chief town of the district. Here also I found ruins; but they were inconsiderable, and seemed more like a Laotian imitation than the work of Khmer Dôme. The inscriptions on the other temples in the province of Korat resemble those of Ongcor: here I found upon a block of broken slate-stone an inscription in Laotian characters, but which is unintelligible even to the inhabitants of the country. These, with some remains of idols and towers at the foot of a mountain in the district, were the only vestiges of that ancient

68: Mouhot--276-277 N-5
116, 122, 174, 609, 631, 177.63
636.63

(1858-61) 1864

Laotians-2
Siam

civilization which I discovered in the north. Everything leads me to suppose that here also were the limits which separated the kingdom of Cambodia from that of Vieng Thiane, destroyed during the last war which the Siamese raised against the Western Laotians or white-bellies. It was in this district that I was stopped in my travels by the authorities of the country, who treated me with great rudeness, and who forbade the people to let me have any means of transport, even after seeing my passport. I was therefore obliged to retrace my steps, deploring the expense and loss of time in the best part of the year, and which will cause me serious inconvenience."

3: Robequain--5

S-5

(no date) 1944

Laotians

116, 175, 177.64

Frante

636.64

"Laos was the last great country to become part of French Indo-China. French influence there had spread gradually, coming first from Cambodia and then from Tonkin and Annam. This peaceful expansion is forever connected with the name of Pavie, the explorer who set out 'to conquer hearts.' Nevertheless, there were clashes with Siam which was eager to acquire all the countries where Thai dialects were spoken. The French protectorate over Laos was not established until the Franco-Siamese treaty of October 3, 1893, under which Siam renounced all claims to territory on the left bank of the Mekong."

7: Thompson--78-79

J-4

(no date) 1937

Laotians

116, 647, 177.64

France

636.64

"Laos offered a virgin field for Doumer's administrative experiments. In 1895, two years after its nominal occupation, Laos had been divided into two districts which corresponded to no geographic or economic reality. Moreover, the country was totally undeveloped, and Cochin-China, as usual, was called upon to subsidize the administrative expenses. In the final analysis, this country had administrators but no administration. It was rather vaguely hoped that the projected railroad system would eventually overcome Laos's [79] geographical barriers and arouse the country from its economic lethargy."

7: Thompson--368-369

J-4

(no date) 1937

Laotians

116,647, 651, 177.64

France

636.64

"Though the year 1893 marked the nominal occupation of Laos, it was not until three years later that the country was organized administratively as Upper and Lower Laos. This division remained purely theoretical and it was modified in 1899, when both sections were united under a single Resident Superior and a single budget. The local organization was left as it was found, only the upper stratum of offices was changed. In this the French were inspired by their Siamese predecessors, who had respected native institutions, and also by budgetary considerations. Thirteen French Commissars, aided by native officials and the inevitable interpreters, exercised all powers with a tranquil disregard of Montesquieu's principles. A native guard was adequate to perform police service among such a placid people. Revenues came from the usual head tax paid by the male population in money and in kind, and the commutation of corvée duty, licences for foreign merchants, and an export tax. There was no land tax and only a local levy on the products of the soil. The indirect tax on opium was harder to collect because certain [369] tribes had always raised enough for their own needs. There was little increase in revenues despite the steady increase in population. The budget was poor and not properly drawn up, so it had to be regularly subsidized. Cochin-China, as usual, bore the brunt of this deficit."

7: Thompson--369-370
116, 647, 645, 653, 177.64
636.64

J-4

(no date) 1937

Laotians-
France

"The centralized administration of Laos was not only part of the French mania for simplification and uniformity, which for various [370] reasons had reached Laos later than elsewhere, but was primarily stimulated by the economic importance of Laos's mines and town building in the post-war period. The modernization of Vientiane was especially notable, for it had been buried under the jungle, 400 kilometres from the sea, and on an almost unnavigable river. When the potential wealth of the country became evident, the administration began to veer away from the Protectorate ideal to direct government, making tabula rasa of native institutions. Some Hanoi officials took it into their head to suppress the King of Luang-Prabang as an obstacle to transforming Laos into a bona-fide colony. Varenne had the good sense to recognize how much the Laotians venerated their king, and so he rescued his throne from the assimilationist peril. The Protectorate was saved, and to push Laos farther along the trail blazed by Annam and Cambodia, a native advisory assembly was given to the country in 1929, and a mixed Chamber of Agriculture and Commerce, both of which recently sent delegates to the Grand Conseil. The process can only fully develop when the rail and road network is completed--that administrative pipe-dream linking Laos to the rest of the Union--which in 1936 looked perilously near fulfilment. An unfortunate corollary is that the forty-year tariff freedom of Laos, a miracle in French colonization, died in 1932 with the growth of the Siamese and Indo-Chinese railroad construction."

7: Thompson--369 [2]
116, 647, 652, 671, 177.64
636.64

J-4

(no date) 1937

Laotians
France

"Of the budget expenditures one per cent was allotted to road building, when paths were almost non-existent in Laos. Fifty per cent of the revenues was absorbed by the administration. A subsidy to the company that navigated the Mekong cost 350,000 francs: the total revenues were 600,000, and all for the occasional transportation of the hundred European residents and their mail. The Laotians were much too amiable and indolent to protest against this state of affairs. They were a charming people, who knew nothing of French civilization but the pleasure of paying taxes. They asked little and so they got little. If this were true of the Laotians it was even more so of the mountain peoples. The country was administered as if it were exclusively inhabited by Laotians. The codes, and the mandarins who applied them, were Laotian. The Provincial Council, long the sole representative organization, had no delegate from the mountaineers. Buddhists were given a monopoly of the education, though the Yaos were Confucianist and the Khas fetishists. The administration concentrated on the valley-bound Laotians and ignored the scattered mountain peoples, who differed radically in religion, language, and customs. The Meos's reaction to the Laotians was shown by the massacre of 1920."

10: d'Orleans--298-299
116, 208, 647, 651 177.64
636.64

T-3 (1891-92) 1894

Laos
France

"To revert to Luang Prabang, we have a Vice-Consul there, or rather an agent, for he has not got an exequatur. Assisted by twelve interpreters, he does wonders with the limited means at his disposal, but as he is generally short of money and is obliged to borrow from the Chinese to pay the staff, he cannot do much to uphold French interests. The most he can do is to keep up the few friends whom he has gained for us by his personal influence and winning ways. For his title of French agent weighs as nothing in the balance compared to his personal popularity, so that he is seconded but not feared, for it is known that he cannot speak out, that his threats will remain a dead letter, that he is not backed up, and that the Foreign Office seems indifferent to the Mekong question. Compare our mode of action to that of the English in Xieng Mai, a Laos State bordering on Burmah and similarly situated to Luang Prabang. At Xieng Mai there is a consul with an exequatur, that is to say duly recognized by the native Government and his own, well [299] paid and backed up by his superiors, having under his own orders several thousand British protégés and holding very much the same position as the Siamese Commissioner here, this latter being everything while we are nothing."

23: Franck--281-282

T-2

(1924) 1926

Laotians

116, 144, 644, 177.64

France

636.64

"The huge commissaire, now half invalid but still a great force in his province, and beloved apparently by all classes of its residents, was a survival of the earlier colonial days, when a man in his present position was virtually king [282] of all he surveyed. His half-dozen pure-blooded dogs all wore stout canvas pants to assure their offspring against mixture with the local mongrel breed. But some officials had not taken the same precautions with themselves, and had several brown-complexioned children at school in Hanoi, though they were bachelors."

23; Franck--303

T-2

(1924) 1926

Laotians

116, 175, 648, 177.64

France

636.64

"The same altruism and love of their fellow-man that has given the French the arduous task of protecting the rest of Indo-China led to their present position in the affairs of Laos. About the time the Chinese from Yunnan were pillaging Luang Prabang kingdom a Frenchman named Pavie was sent there on a mission. The father of the present king, born Tiao Kham Souk, who lived from 1837 until 1904 and reigned under the name of Ritthithamaronsac--though he was more popularly known as King Zacharine, and probably not entirely on account of his sweet disposition--was an absolute despot, descended from a long direct line of similar rulers. For the Kingdom of the Divine Buddha has been a kingdom as far back as the memory of its people goes. Zacharine became a great friend of Pavie, at least according to such data as was available in the French government offices of Luang Prabang, and when the Siamese failed to protect him, as they had promised, against the Chinese, he went to Siam under Pavie's wing; and later, in a quarrel with the Siamese, who had burned and looted and carried off most of the people of Vientiane and Xieng Khuang, he made the mistake, like his royal neighbors of Annam and Cambodia, of calling in the French. By 1893 Siam had been compelled to give up all claim to this ancient kingdom and to the magnificent highlands of Tran-ninh, and all Laos became a European dependency under the protection of France."

73: Hammer--240

S-4

(no date) 1951

Laotians

116, 642, 648, 727, 177.64

France

636.64

"In Laos, as in Vietnam, the Chinese occupation had provided a protective screen behind which a nationalist regime had consolidated itself in power. A Free Laotian movement forced the abdication of King Sisavong Vong, set up its own more representative government, and then brought him back to the throne as the constitutional leader of an independent country. Only after the Chinese withdrew could the French return to Laos, and the Chinese troops were in no haste to leave. China did not withdraw the last of its troops from Indochina until midsummer of 1946. The French promised Laos, as they had Cambodia, to restore the areas taken by Thailand in 1941; (8) and in both countries they

8. On November 17, 1946 the French signed an agreement to this effect with Thailand in regard to both Laotian and Cambodian territory.

played upon the fear of Vietnamese and Thai aggression. On August 27, 1946 they signed an agreement with Laos (recognizing the union of the country under Sisavong Vong, formerly king only of Luang Prabang) much like that with Cambodia, by which they restored the prewar protectorate in modified but not radically changed form."

6: Goudal--5

S-3

(1934) 1938

Laotians-1-4

116, 101, 161, 141, 463, 177.65

France

636.65

"The Tai are of Mongolian race. They came from China and formed various groups, including the Laotians (and the Siamese) and the predominant ethnical group in Upper Tonking. Their numbers are assessed at a million. They are of less than average height (1.59 metres). As a people they are very gay and hospitable. Like the Cambodians, the Laotians are Buddhists, but their religious sense goes hand in hand with very great moral freedom. They are indifferent farmers but engage frequently in fishing and hunting and are excellent boatmen. As traders they possess remarkable qualities.

For a long time the Laotian was considered as an apathetic creature, hating all effort and anxious only to enjoy the present without worrying about the morrow or without trying to improve his moral well-being or his material existence by persevering labour. It cannot be denied that this people, whose country was repeatedly laid waste throughout the centuries by invasions from the north and the west, seemed at the time of our arrival in Indo-China to be doomed to decadence. . . . At the present time the country has roads and tracks, and its doors are open to commercial and industrial undertakings which have already done much for the development of the land and its mineral wealth. The local authorities have no difficulty in securing the very active co-operation of the inhabitants in the construction of roads and tracks. . . . The legend

6: Goudal--5

S-3

(1934) 1938

Laotians-2

116, 101, 161, 141, 463, 177. 65

France

636.65

of the Laotian as an idle creature, exercising passive resistance to any attempt to make use of his intelligence or his physical labour, had disappeared. Far from taking no interest in public welfare as was long asserted, the Laotians on the contrary seem to take a lively interest in it, and in particular in the progress of the development of the country and of the schools and medical institutions that are being established. (2)

2. Léon Archimbaud: Rapport au nom de la Commission des finances sur le budget général des Colonies (1928), pp. 88-89.

This point of view is confirmed by the following statement:

'It has been repeatedly alleged that the Laotian abhors work and does only what is strictly necessary to provide for his own needs and for those of his family. He is said to have two serious defects: a very idle mind and a hatred of effort. This view is mistaken. It is certainly true that there is a certain fundamental apathy and indolence about the Laotian but this can be quite naturally explained by his background and the circumstances

6: Goudal--5

S-3

(1934) 1938

Laotians-3

116, 101, 161, 141, 463, 177, 65

France

636.65

in which his material existence has so far been passed.

'Times have now changed, the country is entirely pacified and war and piracy are merely a memory. . . . Exports of raw materials which were practically non-existent a mere 15 years ago are now increasing rapidly and this is clearly proof that the Laotian worker is not, as has been said, indifferent to gain, but that he can collaborate effectively with the settlers.

'The whole question is one of making use of his services in a manner suited to his special mentality, customs, qualities and defects. It is essential to treat him fairly and kindly; his intelligence and his docility of character enable him to adapt himself gradually to modern working methods. The tin mines in the province of Cammon have for several years been employing Laotian workers who have proved completely satisfactory both for mining the ore and for its treatment.

'Similarly, in connection with road making, in Upper and Lower Laos groups of workers have been used for cutting down

6: Goudal--5

S-3

(1934) 1938

Laotians-4

116, 101, 161, 141, 463, 177.65

France

636.65

trees and clearing away stumps and undergrowth in the heart of a mountainous country where conditions of work are difficult and resources are slight. Under the skilful direction of our administrators and engineers the use of Laotian labour has proved satisfactory in almost every case. ' (M. Bosc: Rapport d'ensemble sur le Laos. Conference on Native Communities held at the International Colonial Exhibition, Paris, 1931.) "

10: d'Orleans--268 T-3

(1891-92) 1894

Laos

116, 166, 651, 177.65

Siam

636.65

"Fishing is one of the principal resources of the inhabitants of the valley of Nam Ou; they are forced to turn everything into money, for they are crushed by the taxes imposed upon them by Siam. The village, on the right bank, in which we spend the night, is inhabited by some people from Traniuh, who tell us that they left their homes three years ago on account of the cholera, they came to Luang Prabang in five nights, and from there they have come up here; but they do not appear to have gained any advantage from their change of place; they have fled from the frying-pan into the fire, for their new conquerors make each man pay eight rupees a year poll tax; they can remember a time before these heavy burdens were laid upon them, but now they can never satisfy the revenue collectors. A great many of them are forced to sell all their possessions."

10: d'Orleans--296-297
116, 208, 647, 651 177.65
636.65

T-3 (1891-92) 1894

Laos
Siam

"We find that a people is being formed; if there is not a sentiment of nationality the governing power is becoming autocratic and an administrative centralization is being effected to its profit, under the control and the direction of the Siamese. The local rulers are in communication with Bangkok, even if they have not been on a visit there; they are learning to appreciate luxury, and they are upon the point of arming their troops with European weapons, of increasing their effective, and lending aid to the forces of the invaders. In order to obtain these charming results of what may be called 'the new civilisation,' much money is needed, but if the king's expenditure has increased it has not been so with the earnings of the people. The latter were not consulted when a tax was put upon opium 'for their good,' when the tchoum-tchoum was made a monopoly, or when a capitulation tax of eight rupees for each man and six for each woman was imposed. The consequence is that they are discontented and unable to make any further payments, mandarins from all parts of the kingdom writing that the villagers are willing enough to come to the capital and take the oath, but empty-handed. Last year several had to sell what they possessed, and now they are endeavouring to borrow, and are murmuring [297] against those who have ruined them. The peasants bow the head in subjection because they see no liberator; but the first man who comes forward with some arms and a relatively small sum of money, in order to drive out the Siamese, may be assured of encountering an enthusiastic and almost unanimous welcome from the population."

7: Thompson--370

J-4

(no date) 1937

Laotians

116, 671, 177.67

France

636.67

"Justice has followed in the wake of the Laotian administration. At first it was left almost untouched, with Laotian codes and magistrates, even for the mountain peoples. In 1900 the Resident Superior, Tournier, made a first tentative translation of some Laotian laws, but he found them so incomplete and so poorly organized that the work was temporarily abandoned. In 1908 Sallé, a Saigon magistrate, took up the task. Beginning with the kingdom of Luang-Prabang he promulgated three codes of civil and criminal law and procedure. Then new texts were discovered, which necessitated more study from 1917 to 1922, when another code was promulgated. It was this time very complete, in fact too complete for the type of judge who applied it. Simplification was needed for their understanding as well as for the illiterate masses. A modified version was put out in 1928, but the following year it was again changed. As in Cambodia and Annam, the problem of discovering, understanding, translating, re-organizing, and harmonizing native law with some basic principles of Western legislation is so delicate that it requires an enormous amount of time and experimentation."

7: Thompson--371
116, 563, 661, 671, 177.67
636.67

J-4

(no date) 1937

Laotians
France

"Nowadays the code of Vientiane or of Luang-Prabang is applied to the Thai peoples and to certain Kha tribes; Burmese custom law to the Lus in Muong Sing; and their particular customs to the other ethnical groups--all under magistrates of their own people. The judgments of these courts are examined by the French authorities. This is not a useless precaution, as often the judges themselves are in a quandary about interpreting their laws and traditions. Moreover, the venality of these judges passes all understanding. If the native appears without offerings appropriate to his station and that of the judge, he is lost. Undoubtedly with time the specialization of magistrates, with guarantees in salary and promotion, will obviate the most flagrant of these evils."

7: Thompson--370-371

J-4

(no date) 1937

Laotians

116, 692, 177.69

France

636.69

"The Resident Superior is at the head of native justice, which is administered by native magistrates under the control of French ad-[371]ministrators. As yet there is no specialization of administrative and judicial powers, since magistrates are taken from the civil service. The general organization of the courts resembles that of the other countries of the Union. Unimportant cases are settled by the heads of the villages and cantons. Important suits are sent to the provincial courts, which are presided over by the administrative head of the province and native judges. A higher court judges appeals from the provincial courts and is placed under the Resident Superior, French, and native judges. Wholly French courts exist for European cases."

10: d'Orleans--265 [2] T-3

(1891-92) 1894

Laos

~~116, 177 70~~

Siam

636. 70

"A Siamese lieutenant, in a yellow silk jacket, white cotton drawers, bare legs, and slippers, invites us to tea at his house. He inquires our names, and promises us some fresh pirogues for the continuation of our voyage. I take advantage of this visit to glance at the armoury of the post. It includes about a dozen rifles of all kinds for percussion caps, Remingtons, Thai, Laotian, &c."

10: d'Orleans--301

T-3

(1891-92) 1894

Laos

116, 644, 701, 177.70

"The Laos army is kept up at a very slight cost, there being only, apart from the Siam troops, a royal corps, dressed in European style and armed with rapid-firing rifles. The rest of the men are supplied in the event of war, by the villages with their own form of weapon, and they are not likely to be dangerous opponents for a long time to come, as shown by the way in which they fled before the soldiers of Deo Van Tri."

10: d'Orleans--258 [2] T-3 (1891-92) 1894
116, 712, 177. 71
636. 71

Laos
Siam

[LSS: at Sop Nao] "Accompanied by Takiate, I repair to the Siamese post, which is formed of a collection of huts rather larger than the others, surrounded by a palisade; there is no flag, but a great many women and dogs. The garrison consists of twelve men, in European clothes made of strong linen, and armed with Remingtons. The officer in charge invites me to sit down and take tea with him. He tells me that the boats are ready, and promises to give us a letter for the chief of Muong Ngoi."

10: d'Orleans--268 [2] T-3
116, 609, 727, 177.72
636.72

(1891-92) 1894

Laos
Siam

"At first they refuse to let us have any provisions, and as we are now without food I am reduced to extreme measures. The villagers assert that they have neither fowls nor eggs in the place.

'If you do not rear poultry,' I reply, 'we may consider that all we find are wild birds,' and I tell the interpreter to open a hen-house and take out two chickens, offering fifteen pence for them, which is, of course, accepted. When the owners have once examined the coins, sounded them and found them good, they regain confidence and bring us some eggs. Their distrust arises from the proceedings of the Siamese soldiers, who, as they travel, requisition everything they require without any payment; the villagers thought that we might do the same, but now they realize that we are honest people. "

10: d'Orleans--292-294

116. 648, 721, 177. 72

636. 72

T-3 (1891-92) 1894

Laos-1-4

France

"Without seeking to undertake an historical work, which would carry us too far, we have only to glance over some of the old maps to find the justification for that phrase of Garnier's which should have been the groundwork of our policy in this region. 'What we had to do was to make the king of Luang Prabang feel that a day might come when we should take up the rights exercised over his principality by the Court of Hué, which has now become once more our vassal. Unfortunately, the Siamese, whose influence had extended, after 1838 (2) towards Luang Prabang, came and [293] established

2. According to Hallett (A Thousand Miles on an Elephant, p. 201), the Shan States of Vienchang and of Luang Prabang became tributary to Siam. The Siamese authority in the Shan States consisted in arranging their external affairs and sanctioning the nomination of their chiefs. In return for the protection of Siam against the foreign invaders, three States consented to send a triennial tribute, consisting of gold and silver boxes, chased cellarettes and salt-cellars, as well as gold and silver trees worth from fifteen to thirty-five pounds each. To these statements of Hallett as to the early date at which Luang Prabang became tributary to Siam, I would rejoin that the chronicles of Luang Prabang, which have been consulted by M. Pavie, do not contain any

10: d'Orleans--292-294

116, 648, 721, 177.72

636.72

T-3 (1891-92) 1894

Laos-2

France

allusions to Siam at an earlier period than the last half-century. The Lai' chronicle, to which I referred above when dealing with Deo Van Tri, only alluded to the state of dependency in which the King of Luang Prabang stood with regard to Annam.

M. Deschanel would seem to have anticipated the views suggested, if not openly expressed by Hallett, Colquhoun and Lord Lamington, when he wrote in 1885: 'The day that England seizes Burmah, our authority in the eastern part of the Indo-Chinese peninsula will receive a severe shock. If we do not take our precautions (in the Upper Laos) the English, once established at Xieng Mai' (in Siamese Laos) will be masters, morally speaking, of the valley of the Mekong and the important position of Luang Prabang, which was tributary to Annam. Thus cut off from the great river, in danger of seeing England secure the protectorate of Siam, our situation in Indo-China will be very much weakened.'--Compare Garnier above,

10: d'Orleans--292-294

T-3

(1891-92) 1894

Laos-3

116, 648, 721, 177.72

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636.72

themselves there for good a few years ago, when they learnt that the French were approaching from the direction of Tonquin. I have already related, when speaking of Deo Van Tri, the ambush set for his brothers, the Siamese officers being accompanied by an Englishman, one McCarthy, who, with another of his compatriots, had been appointed agent at Luang Prabang. I have also referred to the meeting of French and Siamese troops in the plain of Theng, and the retreat of the latter. We were not able to push on any further, for the aged king of Luang Prabang, who [294] had at one time hoped to be backed up by our arms, foresaw the policy of non-intervention and excessive prudence which would be impressed upon our officers. He recognised that the valiant champions of our colonial extension would have their hands tied and that it would be no use reckoning upon us. 'The Siamese are coming up,' he said to Dr. Neis; 'we are lost.'

As a matter of fact, while we were standing still, the Siamese were advancing, and it is easy to understand the political course followed by the Court of Bangkok; as long as it is left free, it is always marching forward, occupying advance posts, sometimes with only seven or eight militia men, but still making a reality of its occupation. But for Colonel Pennequin, Theng would have fared no better than all the important centres upon the Mekong as far as Cambodia and than several towns between the coast and the river; one can feel that these Siamese troops, when they are on the march, have behind them

10: d'Orleans--292-294

T-3

(1891-92) 1894

Laos-4

116, 648, 721, 177.72

France

636.72

the moral if not the effective support of intelligent and fearless persons, who are used to getting their way by firm speaking, the only obstacles which they are likely to encounter from European nations being idle diplomatic protests. "

25: Brodrick--93-94 S-3

(1939) 1948

Laotians-1-2

116, 177.72

France

636.72

"The immediate cause of the extension of French influence over the Upper Laos was the invasion of Luang-Prabang by Siamese troops in 1855, at a time when the French were, with great difficulty, forcing their protectorate upon the realm of the Annamese ruler. It was not until 1893 that the French demanded the withdrawal of the Siamese troops. A French flotilla threatened Bangkok. The Siamese then abandoned all claims to Laotian lands on the left bank of the Mekong, and in 1907 evacuated the Luang-Prabang territories on the right bank. A series of quarrels, bickerings and pin-pricks [94] between British and French concerning the Burmese frontier was finally settled by the Anglo-French Convention of 1896.

The French owe their Laotian protectorate more to Auguste Pavie, a Breton, who landed as a marine N.C.O. at Saigon in 1869, than to any other one man. Pavie, a bright lad, qualified as a telegraph officer and travelled far and wide in Cambodia learning the language and getting to know the people. Le Myre de Vilars, the first civilian to govern Cochin-China for the French, sent Pavie up the Mekong on a mission of exploration, and in 1885 secured his nomination as consul at Luang-Prabang. Pavie gained the confidence of the Laotians, took sides in natives' disputes and induced the Luang-Prabang ruler to ask for French 'protection.' Later, as French representative at Bangkok, Pavie led the negotiations preceding the Franco-Siamese Convention. The

25; Brodrick--93-94

S-3

(1939) 1948

Laotians-2

116, 177.72

France

636.72

ex-N. C. O. had made good and, of course, was quite forgotten by his fellow-countrymen when he died in 1895.

He had given his country a vast territory over one-third the size of France."

23: Franck--301
116, 657, 779, 177.77
636.77

T-2

(1924) 1926

Laotians
France

"But the French do not insist on imposing their religious beliefs on their wards and colonies. In Luang Prabang they go so far as to provide for the up-keep of the temples and monasteries in the annual governmental budget. In a way this is a means of supporting the educational system, for the priests act as schoolmasters to their novices. In great contrast to China, there is not a single Christian missionary in all the Kingdom of the Divine Buddha, not even a Catholic priest."

25; Brodrick--104 [2]

S-3

(1939) 1948

Laotians

France

116, 779, 177.79

636.79

"In the kingdom of Luang-Prabang there is no doubt that Little Vehicle is the state religion. We have seen how royally and respectfully. H. M. King Sisavang Vong received the Venerable Narada and his slip of the sacred Bodhi Tree. [HD: see category 116, p. 62-63] And the efforts of the French administration to purge the practice and reform the discipline of the monks was mildly successful in the Laos though not so obvious as in Cambodia. Still, the Laotians are difficult to coerce."

7: Thompson--376-377

J-4

(no date) 1937

Laotians

116, 814, 177.81

France

636.81

"The tempo of France's political and economic penetration of Laos has been so much slower than elsewhere in the peninsula that the intellectual counterpart inevitably lagged ever farther behind. Naturally, the [377] first work accomplished was of a practical nature. Massie, of the Pavie Mission, wrote a dictionary in 1890-91, that included some 1,300 words, designed to aid French officials and merchants adrift in Thai countries. He found the language very simple, unlike the complexities of Annamite, and estimated only a year's study necessary for a relative mastery of it."

7: Thompson--377
116, 484, 815, 177.81
636.81

J-4

(no date) 1937

Laotians
France

"Laos has offered a rich field to scientists. Henri Mouhot was its first scientific explorer, and he was followed by others, chiefly zoologists. The Lagrée Mission continued this work, as did Dr. Harmand, who made a great collection there on his 1872-78 series of explorations. Pierre's work on the forest flora of Laos has been perhaps the greatest single scientific achievement."

7: Thompson--377 [2]

J-4

(no date) 1937

Laotians

116, 871, 177. 87

France

636. 87

"Much too small a sum has been allotted to education in the Laotian budget. Even elementary instruction is confined to the chief towns of the country and to the inadequate pagoda schools. Following the success of utilizing the Khmer bonzes as intermediaries, the French tried a similar policy in Laos with much less good fortune. To begin with, it gave the monopoly of education to the bonzes in a country not by any means wholly Buddhistic. The result has been that the mountain peoples remain quite illiterate. The French, in their love of simplification and uniformity, enjoy giving to a formula, which happened to succeed under one set of circumstances, an unjustifiably universal significance. As elsewhere in Indo-China, Laos has suffered from the assimilationist tendency to train natives for menial government service, as clerks and interpreters, by means of a French programme of studies that uproots its Asiatic victims spiritually from their setting. Only in Laos, through negligence or indifference on the part of both French and Laotians, this occurred much later. In 1928, however, Pasquier, on a tour in Laos, was horrified to hear a teacher expounding to his youthful pupils such irrelevant material as the French Wars of Religion."

7: Thompson--378
116, 872, 874, 177.87
636.87

J-4

(no date) 1937

Laotians
France

"In 1931 the government reluctantly pulled itself together to remedy an admittedly bad situation. Certain provinces and certain bonzes were selected as fields for experimentation. An itinerant teacher was sent around to the pagoda schools to conduct model classes with a very simple programme, as a practical demonstration before the bonzes. Blackboards, textbooks, and chalk were doled out to these schools, which had heretofore lacked even such elementary equipment. Bonzes were asked to report semi-annually on the number and progress of their pupils. Slowly an examination was organized with a certificate, so as to set up some standard and to stimulate the sluggish Laotian zeal for knowledge. The problem of further training for bonzes is delicate. The idea of a small scale Normal School was again revived in 1932, and attempts were made to avoid some of the pitfalls which had doomed earlier experiments. The majority of bonzes still could not teach either reading or writing. They were less than half-hearted in falling in with the government's ideas, and would break training at the slightest provocation, thus automatically condemning their schools. The new courses are more modern in method, more prudent in application, and more successful in their results than the old, but it is too soon as yet to draw any conclusions about that elusive and infinitesimal effort known as Laotian education. Less than 300 schools teach fewer than 7,000 pupils in French Laos."